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D.P. Chattopadhyaya

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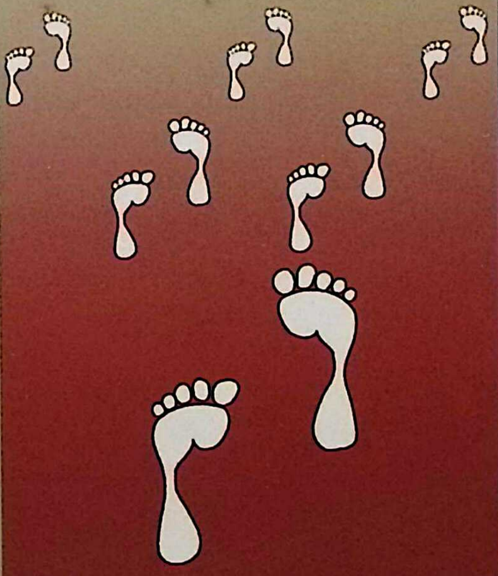

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ARTICLES

Himansu S. Patnaik

Glimpses of Orissan History

Introduction

"There are some places in the world that are special and Orissa is definitely one of them. Filled with exquisite temples and extraordinary monuments, home to many thousands of prolific artists and craftsmen .... Orissa is a unique and fascinating land that is, nevertheless, still largely undiscovered," wrote Maureen Liebl. Viewing it as a tourists' paradise, she continued, "Orissa is a place like no other, a glowing green jewel of a state".

Located between 17°48" and 20°34" north latitude and 81°24" and 87°29" east longitude and on the eastern sea-board of India with a stretch of 482 km of gentle coast-line, Orissa faces the Bay of Bengal in the east, West Bengal and Jharkhand in the north, Madhya Pradesh in the West and Andhra Pradesh in the south. The western boarders are sealed by the Eastern Ghats. Resurgent Orissa, formed by the British in 1936, became vibrant and natural in 1948 when the Oriya princely and feudatory states merged into Orissa to restore to it a semblance, and almost an apology of its historical expanse and stature. Modern Orissa is of recent political origin with an area of about 1,56,000 sq.kms. interspersed with sacred places, three mighty rivers and Asia's largest lake. Most of its nearly 37 million population live in small and traditional villages though, of late there is a marginal swing to the contrary; but urban or rural, the people of Orissa "share a strong sense of the holiness of their beautiful land and of their enduring links with the past."

The history of Orissa appears to be in perpetual clash with her geography. Geographical forces and factors had played a crucial role in the absence of political unity in the state. The pressures of alien invasion were experienced either from the north or from the south, yet seldom did the region ever present a united front to alien aggression, and the repercussions were seldom felt by the state as a whole. Even the establishment of one of the four *pithas* of the country in the *Purusottama Kshetra* of Lord Jagannath could not make it as strong a rallying point of political unity and cultural unanimity as it was potentially capable of at least logico-epistemologically. "A story or drama ... has a time of its own, and yet may be an eternal object of contemplation for those who are interested in it. This is (equally) true of the great drama of human history. In retrospect, the phrase 'idealistic realism' appears to be not a contradiction in terms in the context of the history of Orissa.

If history is philosophy teaching by examples, Orissan history is a unique case of a pan-Indian continuum from remote times till the present. Its cultural pluralism has been, throughout the ages, tempered and transcended through its rich philosophical and spiritual tradition that has taken in its strides the first flashes of Buddhism and Jainism, the pivotal saints of Christianity (vide Sylvan Levi, *An Aquarian Gospel*), followers of Islam like Amir Ali and Salabega, and a galaxy of Hindu saints and savants from Sankaracharya, Ramanuja, Nimbarka, Vallabhacharya, Nanak, Kabir, Chaitanya, Sankaradeva—a travail culminating in Totapuri in the last century. Viewed in this light evolution of Orissa's history and culture from ancient till contemporary times would indicate the confirmation of the concept of cultural pluralism—the strong base of unity, amity and homogeneity. Any reconstruction of Orissan history should be in this perceptive. Appropriately therefore *Kapila Samhita* speaks of the uniqueness of Orissa. "*Utkalasya sama desa nasti mahitale*" (there is hardly a state under the sun as good as Orissa).

The Region

Antiquities of pre-historic period in Orissa as well as relics of 'old', 'middle' and 'new' Stone Ages can be found in abounding specimens in Mayurbhanj, Sambalpur, Koraput, Sundargarh, Puri, Cuttack and Dhenkanal districts. The migration of Aryans to Orissa is a post-vedic phenomenon that gradually led to a Saora-Dravidian-Aryan synthesis here. In ancient times, Orissa consisted of different units; the bigger territorial units were Kalinga, Utkala, Odra, Tosala and Kosala. The smaller units were Kongoda, Svetaka, Khinjalimandala Khijingamandala, Yamagartta mandala, Airavatamandala, Dandabhuktimandala and Trikalinga. But the earliest units were Kalinga, Utkala, Odra and Kosala. The Puranas refer to Utkala as the oldest among the lot and attribute to it a mythical origin. It is named after one of the ten sons of Manu who got the eastern territory as his share of the ten parts of India. The epics, Buddhist scriptures and the Puranas describe Utkala in vivid details. Historical evidences suggest that in 4th century AD, Utkala covered the territory from Midnapore to Ganjam. This stands corroborated in Kalidasa's *Raghuvansam.* By the 7th century, Utkala included parts of south-west of Bengal beyond Balasore. The Bhaumakara dynasty (736–940 AD) ruled over Utkala covering the whole of erstwhile Puri, Cuttack and Balasore districts and it was during this period that the two holy "*Kshetras*" at Jagannath-Puri and Biraja-Jajpur came to attract national attention. Utkal was also referred to as Uttara-Tosala (vide Ashoka's Dhauli Rock Edict) and Odra.

Historical geography however suggests that Kalinga was the vastest region and at the height of its power, came to stretch, beyond its expanse from the Godavari to the Chilika, till the Ganges. This climatic expansion was made possible during the times of Kharavela, the Chedi monarch (1st century BC) of Orissa; the *Mahabharat,* 'Pali' works as well as Panini, Kautilya and Meghasthenes substantiate it. It was the most powerful among the territorial units of the region. Till 1st century AD the Ganges constituted its northern border. The region's soil was exceptionally fertile, as attested by Pliny and Meghasthenes. It was under the Nanda rule in 4th century BC as the 'Hatigumpha' inscriptions say. During the war with Asoka, the Rusikulya was its southern boundary. The contraction of its southern extent was due to the rise of the Satavahana dynasty in the Andhra region. Post-Kusana antiquities tend to suggest that either it came under the Kusana rule or the Murunda rule over parts of Bihar and Kalinga might have introduced the Kusana coins to Kalinga. That the 'Harisena Prasasti' does not mention Kalinga is indicative of its disintegration by the time of Samudragupta. Khallikote went by Gupta era and so Kalinga must have been conquered by the Guptas. Then it came to be under the Matharas (350 AD, Ganjam only), Gangas of Kalinganagara from the Mahendra Hill (498 AD) and Eastern Gangas (till 7th century AD). A small dynasty (Vigraha) ruled for a short while beyond Ganjam after 569 AD. A scion of the Eastern Gangas the Svetaka Gangas ruled over Chikiti in Ganjam. The Sailodbhavas (6th to 8th century), feudatory of Sasanka, ruled over the region. Hiuen Tsang (638 AD visit to Orissa) described it as nearly 1500 'Li' to the south of Kangoda. The capital of Kalinga was Mukhalingam, also known as Kalinganagara, By the end of 7th century, a truncated Kalinga only covered Ganjam and Srikakulam districts. The Bhaumakara rule over Orissa is silent about Kalinga, while speaking about its sway over the other three areas of Gauda, Odia and Kosala during 8th and 9th centuries.

Kosala, 1800 'Li' from Kalinga, covered the erstwhile districts of Sambalpur, Sundargarh and Bolangir. It had come under the Gupta rule. Tradition has it that Lord Rama stayed here in the upper Mahanadi valley in course of his wanderous exile. He named this area around Chhatisgarh as South Kosala, after his homeland 'Kosala'. Later he bequeathed Kosala with its capital at Sravasti to Lava and South Kosala with its capital at Kusavati or Kusasthalipura near the Vindyas to Kusa.

Odra, almost synonymous with Utkal, covered the three holy places of Jajpur, Puri and Konark. It gets lavish coverage in *Manu Samhita* (2nd century BC) and *Brahmā Purāna*. Out of this name, Kapilendra gave the name Odisha to his Kingdom (1436 AD) and the poet Sarala Dasa spoke of '*Odishārāstra*'. Tri-Kalinga was a small Kingdom covering parts of Sambalpur, Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput and was only prominent under the eastern-Ganga ruler Indravarman-I (537 AD). The Orissan irredenta covered, and continues to do so, some regions of Bengal, Chhatisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.

The variety of names of Orissa's component units are borne out of the tribes or people of the area. 'Okkala' and 'Oddisa' mean farmers in some Dravidian languages, later Sanskritised into 'Utkala' and 'Odra'. Kangoda comes out of the plentiful honey (kangh in Tamil) of the area; Kalinga, out of Kalinji on the southern bank of the Chilka lake. Kalingas can still be found in Ichhapuram of the old Ganjam district and now in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh, The Kalingas speak Oriya while Kalinjas speak Telugu invariably. Oda cultivators still abound in and around Khurda—as last of the Odras.

Sources

The history of Orissa can be broadly periodized into three time-spans, i.e. (i) from remote times till 1568 when Orissa came to lose her political independence, (ii) from 1568 to 1803 covering a history of Orissa under the Afghan Moghul and Maratha rules, and (iii) from 1803 when the British took over Orissa till the modern times. The informations are constituted primarily by epigraphic, numismatic, archaeological and literary source-material. The inscriptions of Asoka (3rd century BC) at Dhauli adjacent to the battle field of Kalinga war, and at Jaugada are also known as Kalinga edicts. In the Rock Edict-XIIII at Dhauli, mention is made of the horrors of the war, while the edicts XI and XII at these respective places speak of the benevolent administration. The Hatigumpha Inscription (First century BC) at Udaygiri hill in Bhubaneswar lexicographs the achievements, conquests and paternalistic administration of Orissa's greatest ruler, Kharavela. From Mathura to the Pandyas and from east-coast to the west Kharavela bestrode like an invincible conqueror and a paragon of virtuous rule. The facts of this inscription are corroborated by inscription at Manchapuri in Bhubaneswar and Guntapally in Andhra. The Bhadrak inscription and Asanpat inscription highlight the condition of Orissa during pre- and post-Gupta periods while the Allahabad-pillar inscription narrates Orissa's political condition under the Guptas. The Jayarampur copper-plates and records of Matharas, Vasisthas, Nalas, Vigrahas, Bhajan and early Gangas, though sporadic and fragmentary, supply vital clues to the reconstruction of Orissan history. The copper-plates galore of the Sailodbhavas, Bhaumakaras and Samavamsis are exhaustive and seldom rudimentary—as are the imperial charters of the Gangas and the Suryavamsi Gajapatis. The contemporary records of the Cholas, Palas and Rastrakutas substantiate the above, too. There are many stone inscriptions outside Orissa from Maihar in MP to Holai in Karnatak, which throw light on Lord Jagannath and the Kalingan School of temple architecture.

Punch-marked coins, Roman coins, 'archer' gold coins of the Guptas and the Ganga gold fanams tell their own story. Coins of the neighbourhood like those of Kalachuri's, Yadavas and Vijayanagara reflect the periods of eclipse of Orissan autonomy. Archaelogical remains at Mayurbhanj, Sisupalgarh, Bhubaneswar, Konark, Puri, Jajpur and Western Orissa as well as the material remains of caves, stupas and viharas help to reconstruct Orissan history through their plethora of information.

Literary sources range from the vedic, epic, puranic, samhita, Buddhist, Jaina works to the works of Kautilya, Kalidasa as well as the Jagannath temple Chronicle (Mādalā Pānji). These are supplemented by works of individual writers from time to time. Accounts of Orissa come in plenty from foreigners like Megasthenes, Pliny, Ptolemy, Fa-hien, Hiuen Tsang, Khurdadhbih, Mirza Nathan and the Europeans, interspersed with objectivity, obscurantism and wide ambience. Records, official as well as personal, also add up as also the papers, journals and magazines of the modern period.

Orissan histography appears to be a three dimensional one. The first is how time was viewed in the ancient times from 6th century BC to 16th century AD. Did the history of Odra-desha have an end or was there a cyclical pattern to life in this part of the country? The second dimension is the manner in which history was then written: the ways in which the Persian and Christian logographers bent their sources to fit into the thesis they proposed to propound. The British historians came to influence a great deal the Indian historians writing on Orissa who wrote on the variety, splendour or poverty of

Orissa without a thorough historical philological and doctrinal context. The third dimension is constituted by native historians. They addressed themselves to the questions of earlier interpretation that appeared superficial to them in the micro-empirical context. Their approach has been to integrate social groups and incorporating various new source-materials, they have gone capably ahead in historical resource-management by highlighting organizational structures and power relationships, the redistribution of power in the context of long term structural changes. Far from signalling social stagnation and decay, decline of the imperial order and the transformation of the political system are made to appear to reflect the process in which the state dynamically adjusted to changes in economy and society. Hence, they projected, the organizational power and capacity for social control of the state came to be significantly enhanced.

Whether he was the *tadhau-karan* in charge of the compilation of the temple chronicle (*mādalā Pānji*) under royal supervision, or the mystic visionary like Sarala Dasa or the Pancha Sakhā who tried to project the faith of the people of Orissa as their life-blood whose pragmatic vicissitudes had withstood the pressures of many defeats, or the apostle of nascent nationalism and reformism like Krupasindhu Misra, Jagabandhu Singh or Pyarimohan Acharya, the writings of early Oriya historians are a typical exemplification of Orissa's distinctive individualism. Or, as Jayanta Mohapatra calls it, "a tiny happiness and a large grief".

From the grandiloquence of *Jagannāth Dharma*, the mystic rhythm of Odissi dance and music, the dare-east Asia, the indomitable militancy of the times of Asoka and Kharavela to that of Buxi Jagabandhu and Surendra Sai, the Aryan-Dravidian synthesis since the days of Viswabasu and Vidyapati, to the serene façade of Jayadeva, Rai Ramananda, Chaitanya, Sarala Dasa right up to the times of Gopabandhu and Madhusudan, Orissa has blazed a glorious trail against which background the myriads of the whole declivity reach the ear today as a shrivelled and intermittent recitative.

Recent trends in Orissan historiography reflect a scholarship that crosses over the old 'pre-modern/modern' and 'modern/

contemporary' divides, characterized by an intellectual rigour and accessible style. Pivoted and pioneered by three amateur historians, the only ones to have been honoured with 'padmashree', it has come to be a re-examination of the cultural dynamics of Orissa while encapsulating the original findings. What establishes further these three musketeers of Orissan history Pt. Sadasiv Rath Sharma, Paramanand Acharya and Satyanarayan Rajguru, is the qualitative methodology of research; seeking to advance theoretical practice concerns along with comparative experiences to further the potential for collective learning and convergence.

Today, historical research reflects the considerable expansion and diversification that has occurred in historical research in Orissa in recent years. The old reoccupation with political history has been integrated into a broader framework which places equal emphasis on social, economic and cultural history. Even subaltern approaches are fast coming up with regard to 19th and 20th century issues.

It all goes to substantiate the fact that evidence constitutes the hard core of historical writing. History is not a meaningless chance. Neither it is a spontaneous overflow of emotions or loose sally of mind, nor it is legend or myth. History is, in Droysen's words, "Mankind's knowledge of itself; its self-awareness". Historical experience is existential self-consciousness against the anguish of time.

Historical experience may be contemporary but historical knowledge is modern. To quote Hans Kohn, "History ... represents the meeting, the interaction, the interrelationship of objective and subjective factors. The facts of the past present the objective material; the ethos and the personality of the historian present the subjective factor without which the facts of the past and the past itself remain dead." Objectivity is the core of historical research—even if it is a variant from one historian to the other. History written out of basic sources alone helps one to plunge into the abysmal depths of reality to bring out pearls of introspective truth. But paucity of these basic resources poses a serious constraint on reconstructing history. However ancient Orissan history has been reconstituted on the basis of epigraphy, numismatic, archaeological remains and literary evidences. For medieval and modern periods of Orissan history, the archival source materials and other documentary evidences are of prime importance.

The archival source-materials go a long way in helping to write the history of Orissa by virtue of their abundance. These archival records are normally classified as official and semi-official or private. The former are collections from various government departments that are collected and then stored in archives. Such official records and source-materials pertaining to the modern history of Orissa are stacked away in the Orissa State Archives, Orissa Board of Revenue, West Bengal State Archives and National Archives at New Delhi. These contain numerous files, correspondences, orders and circulars etc. on varied issues like administration, revenue matters, education, health, law and order as well as on judicial matters. Apart from these official archival records, the private records with non-governmental institutions and private individuals, go a long way in establishing their credibility as primary sources. Thanks to these archival records, flashes of new light have continually come to be shed on history of Orissa during the Mughal, Maratha, East India Company and British rule. This has facilitated the reconstruction of the history of Orissa.

These records not only speak of multifarious reciprocal modifications as well as elitism in the morphology of Orissan history, thereby helping an ascertainment and recording of facts pertaining to the social phenomena of the civilization and culture of Orissa. Stray samples and examples may be cited in this regard. Orissa lost her independence in 1568 and was consequently occupied by the Afghans of Bengal after the comprehensive defeat of Mukunda Deva. A crucial role was played, in this entire episode by 'Kalapahara'. It is generally believed that this Afghan general was originally a Hindu and was later converted to Islam. The archival records however speak to the contrary—dispelling, thereby, a vital mistaken notion about him. He was, the records sway, an Afghan, Alahdad by name and 'Kalapahara' was his designation. We depend exclusively on Persian records to know about Orissa's political, social, economic and cultural condition during the Muslim rule. These speak of the identity of Orissan nature like the prestigious position of the Balasore port, the administrative importance of Cuttack as well as the cultural synthesis that Jagannath-Puri came to exemplify. The *'mahāprasād'* brotherhood was particularly conspicuous during the period when, the Hindus and Muslims used to jointly partake of *mahāprasād* at Puri. History has few such landmarks to show communal harmony and salacious secularism.

The Marathas brought Orissa under their control in 1751. There is however no reason to believe in the fantastic popular notion that the Marathas were cruel and oppressive. Their archival records show them as having done a lot for Orissa. Particularly in the context of the Jagannath temple they did a yeoman's service. They renovated the temple time and again, beautified it with installations brought over from Konark and deified Lord Jagannath as their own God. Interestingly, the idea of installing an icon of their God Vitthaldev seldom came to their mind and there is hardly any iconographic representation of Vitthaldev anywhere at Puri. Such a conspicuous omission coupled with their gratuitous attitude towards the *Jagannath Dharma* would substantiate such a conclusion.

In 1765, the East India Company came to possess the *'dewani'* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. In 1803 the company came to occupy Orissa. What Clive had frantically tried to achieve was thus realized during the time of Wellesley. The British archival records show that the British took over the fort of Barbati in Cuttack on 14th October, 1803. The Deogaon truce of 17 December 1803 led Raghuji Bhonsle to surrender the province of Cuttack along with the district and port of Balasore to the British. As a result, Cuttack, Puri and Balasore came under company rule. Subsequently 18 princely states of Orissa came to acknowledge the Company's suzerainty over them. These constituted Orissa during the 19th century. Ganjam which had earlier come under Company's rule was made a part of the Madras presidency.

The Paik rebellion of 1817 bears discernible symptoms of the futility of the Company rule in Orissa. This rebellion was led by Buxi Jagabandhu. This conflagration was sparked off from Banpur on 29 March 1817. The entry of the Kondhs of Ghumsur helped its super-incumbent heat and radiance to penetrate other areas, beyond Khurda, Puri, Gop, Kanika, Kujang etc. bore livid and vivid testimony of this rebellion. It took the best of the British efforts to suppress this rebellion. Myths have it that the hero of this pivotal rebellion against the British, Buxi Jagabandhu, was done to death at Nayagarh by the British. But archival records have it that he was kept as a prisoner under constant surveillance at Cuttack and he died at Cuttack in 1829.

Archival records thus help discard many mistaken notions. The Konark temple is a case of this category. Many researchers believed that the construction of the temple of Konark was never completed, nor was any image of Sun-God ever worshipped there. Such contentions found profuse mention in books and monographs after the collapse of the main temple. But sketches of the Konark temple, drawn at various times in 1809, 1820 and 1837, show the complete temple. It is highly probable that the temple could not withstand the ravages of the typhoon of 1847 and the main temple consequently caved in. The late Pt. Sadasiv Rath Sarma was the first historian to harp upon this, highlighting the incongruous compromises with *silpa shāstras* that led to the lop-sided nature of the construction that was highly vulnerable to coastal typhoon. The lower portions of the temple were even covered by sands washed by the typhoon to be accumulated at the trunk of the temple at dune-like heights.

The revolt of 1857 was a monumental event of Indian history. Normally known to history as the Sepoy Mutiny, it was interpreted by many scholars in many ways. Though not a representative revolt of all classes, this mutiny was also not exclusively a Sepoy affair. One such non-Sepoy participant was Chaki Khuntia of Puri. Some self-effacing and anti-Puri historians of Orisa discarded him as a fictional character when a letter purported to have been written to him by the Rani of Jhansi and recovered from Puri was rather impatiently discarded as forged. Chaki Khuntia was relegated to myth and fiction by historians who neither had the patience to examine his devotional songs to Lord Jagannath that contained appeals to the Lord in the name of patriotism against the alien British rule, nor had the equanimity and objectivity to project him as the only selfless patriot of 1857 who acted as a temporary temporal hyphen between Laxmi Bai and the people of Jhansi. He was even deemed as dead until his return to Puri much later. This impatient attitude of the pseudo-apostles of historical objectivity has come to flounder on the British archival records that showed him as a 'rebel' in British eyes. Yet, such a key historical figure has come to get cold-shoulders from researchers till today. Reference may also be made here of another illustrious contemporary, Surendra Sai, about whose undaunted and valiant patriotic struggles against the British the archival records wax eulogy. He breathed his last in the far way fort Ashirgarh.

A glaring example of the faulty and futile nature of the British administration of Orissa was the great famine of 1866. Such an introspective realization was to constitute the spring-board for utilitarian measures and developments in the last quarter of 19th century. Growth of communication network whose capstone point was the introduction of railways, growth of education and the consequent 'Oriya movement' went a long way in the inculcation and spread of a feeling of nationalist consciousness. So came the consequent demand for linguistic provinces and the Oriya movement took up the gauntlet for the amalgamation of all Oriya-speaking tracks into a separate province of Orissa. The Satyavadi movement from the facile pens and teeming brains of the neo-*pañchasakhā* began for self-help and self-awareness which consequently decided to merge into the mainstream of the Congress movement under Gandhiji. The *Utkala Sammilani* had taken the initiative since 1903 for the formation of the separate province of Orissa. The inaugural session of the Indian National Congress at Bombay was attended by a lawyer from Berhampur of Ganjam district. The Congress records speak of it. From 1920, the Oriya speaking tracks joined hands to participate in the national movement with unity and unanimity. The pioneer was Gopabandhu Das who came to head the newly formed Utkal Pradesh Congress Committeee. He and Madhusudan Das were the pivots of Orissa's participation in the national mainstream. Laudable was Orissa's role in the Non-cooperation, Civil Disobedience, *Garjāt Prajāmandala* and Quit India movements. Rama Devi and Sarala Devi were among the first women participants in the Gandhian movement from 1921. The salt agitation of 1930 found Inchudi, Kujang and Huma basking in the plagiarised glory of Dandi. At the macro-structural level, Orissa's salt agitation was at par with that of Gujarat. Similarly, every nook and corner of Orissa vociferously participated in the Quit India movement. Twenty-eight people were gunned down to martyrdom at Eeram in Balasore on 28 September 1942. This was perhaps the most barbarous and savage gun-fire of the Quit India movement that might have led a Hun to blush and a barbary pirate apologize.

The archival records speak profusely of the sequential description of events pertaining to our society. Only through these archival data can a comprehensive reconstruction of the history of Orissa be possible. Specific objectivity is its motto; a calmness or quiescence within the scaffolding of history is its character.

Puranic and Buddhist traditions have it that Kalinga has been a powerful kingdom. Ever since the death of its King Srutayudha at hands of Bhimasena in the Kurukshetra war, a new *Ksatriya* dynasty took over to restore its lost glory. Till the Nanda dynasty took over Kalinga, and since the *Mahabharata* war, 32 *Kshatriya* kings ruled over Kalinga in succession. Mahapadma Nanda killed the last of them and annexed Kalinga to his Magadhan empire. The economy of Kalinga got a boost with construction of an irrigation network to eradicate famine condition. Eight generations of the Nandas ruled over Kalinga. During the time of Chandragupta Maurya's rebellion against the ninth one, Kalinga seceded to proclaim herself independent. The first two Maurya rulers hardly made any effort to bring back Kalinga to the Magadhan fold. It was Asoka who did so in and through the Kalinga War of 261 BC. The horrors of this war transformed Magadhan imperialism to 'dharmavijay'. The Viceroyalty of Kalinga came to be vested with a 'Kumara' (prince) at its headquarters at Tosali. At the second headquarters at Samapa, only an executive officer was stationed. Under imperial patronage, Buddhism engulfed the whole of Kalinga and made it a spring-board for its pan-Indian, Ceylonese and

South-east Asian influences; interestingly, the two Kalingans, Tapusa and Vallika, had been the first two disciples of the Buddha himself. For half a century after the death of Asoka in 232 BC, the Mauryan empire continued before its final disintegration. The maritime glory of Kalinga and the extensive 'kling' influence in south-east Asia were beacon features of this time.

Kalinga reassumed its autonomy and independence during 1st century BC when under the Chedi King Mahameghavahan Aira Kharavela, it reached its apotheosis of power and pinnacle of glory. During his 13-year rule, he humbled the might of the Satavahanas, triumphed at Rajagriha to frighten away the advancing Indo-Greeks, put to blush the Tamil confederacy and forced the King of Magadha to come to his knees—a glorious cavalcade of successive military successes; alternately, he ruled as a benevolent ruler, secular in spite of his heavy leanings on Jainism, paternalistic to his subjects through charity and generosity, and an adroit champion of welfare of his subjects. The Jaina caves in the Kumari hills were excavated under his orders as also the victory palace to commemorate his triumph over the Indo-Greeks. Repair of gates and ramparts damaged by cyclone, renovation of irrigation projects and recovery from Magadha of the 'Jina' image taken away from Kalinga were some of the other feathers in his illustrious cap. His magnanimity is well illustrated in the Hatigumpha inscription that describes him as a worshipper of all faiths and repairer of the shrines of all faiths. History has seldom witnessed a parallel to him as an ideal, versatile, temperate, highly educated and accomplished monarch. Weak successors lingered on till two more centuries till the region was taken over in 1st century AD by Goutamiputra Satakarni. From Satakarni's death in 202 AD till the Gupta conquest of the region around mid-4th century, the history of the region paled into virtual obscurity under the rule of the Murundas and the Nagas. Samudragupta's military juggernaut ground to dust the resistance of Mahendra of South Kosala, Mantaraja of Kosala, Vyaghraraja of Kantara and the Kalingan Chiefs Swamidutta (of Kuttura), Damena (of Erandapala), Kuvera (of Devarastra) and Mahendragiri (of Pishtapura).

Kalinga came under the Mathara dynastic rule in the post-Gupta period. The Mathara power emerged from Paralakhemundi and at its height of glory, covered the region from Krishna to the Mahanadi with its capital at Pishtapur in South Kalinga. Internal dissentions and external threats corroded the Mathara rule to its extinction by 498 AD. This year commences the Ganga era in the region. The first Ganga King of Kalinga, Indravarman I, operated from his capital at Dantapura to successfully humble the Vishnukundin power. Though most of the initial rulers of this dynasty of eastern Gangas were powerful and assumed the title of *Trikalingādhipati* and *Sakala Kalingādhipati* and though most of them were erudite scholars of Veda, Vedanga, Itihasa and Puranas, they only continued as a petty power till 1038 AD. The Nala dynasty held sway over a petty region covering parts of Bastar, Koraput and Kalahandi with its capital at Pushkari, interestingly, the name of the Kingdom was Trikalinga. The eastern Gangas took over the region after the Vakatakas had deposed the Nala rule (400–480 AD). The rule of the Parvatadwarakas over Bolangir and Kalahandi to the north of the Nala domains, of the Suras and Sarabhapuriyas in south Kosala (4th to 6th centuries), of the Durjayas in South Kalinga and of the Vigrahas in north Kalinga appear not so consequential in the larger context. Orissan history comes to regain its momentum and stature from late 6th century, with the rise of a new dynasty called the Sailodbhavas.

During the 6th–7th centuries, the Sailodbhavas rose as a new dynasty of stature and prominence to rule over the region from the Mahanadi to the Mahendragiri, elevating themselves from their feudatory status. It was generally a period of turmoil due to struggles between the Vigraha and Mudgala factions as well as the conquest of Sasanka over the region in 615 AD. As Mahasamanta of Sasanka, the Sailodbhavas had sway over Utkal and Kangoda and proclaimed their autonomy after 620 AD as the Lord of the entire Kalinga—except for five years of feudatory status from 642 to 647 AD when Harshavardhana conquered the region. After the successes of Kings of this dynasty like Madhavavarman and Madhyamaraja I, weak successors fought it out among themselves and naturally came to be overthrown by a new dynasty in 736 AD. Sivakaradeva-I, the ruler of this new dynasty of Bhaumakaras, started the Bhauma-era in 736 AD, as per the wont of contemporary times. Titles like *'Anugata'* and *'Paramopāsaka'* would categorize them as Buddhists. The Kangoda Tosali and Svetaka territories were brought under their control. Successive generations dedicated themselves to Buddhism, built Mohini Temple and Ganesh Gumpha at Bhubaneswar and 64-yogini temple at Hirapur, prided themselves with the first woman ruler of Orissa (Goswamini Tribhuvana Mahadevi, the widow of Santikara-I)—the many woman successors of this dynasty were more involved in palace-intrigues than prosperity of the state. The dynasty was overthrown by the Somavamsi King Dharmaratha after 960 AD.

The Somavamsis were originally known as Panduvamsis and held sway over Kosala with its capital at Jajatinagar—named after its founder Jajati-I. His grandson conquered Tosali, Kangoda and Kalinga and started the dynastic rule which was temporarily disrupted by its defeat at the hands of the Bhoja-Rajendra Chola combine. Mahasivagupta Jajati-II was one of the greatest rulers of this dynasty and held sway virtually over the whole of Orissa (Kosala, Utkala, Kalinga and Kangoda). The Lingaraj and Brahmesvar temples at Bhubaneswar were constructed at his and his queen Kalavati's behest respectively. Their son Udyota Kesari was a devout Saiva and follower of Jainism—indicative of the period of theological flux of the time in Orissa when Shaivism, Saktism, Buddhism, Jainism and nascent Vaisnavism overlapped mutually. He is also credited with having built the *Jagamohana* of the Lingaraj Temple and the Navamuni cave at Khandagiri. The frontier military outpost at Bamanda came to be lost to the Kalachuris during his reign as also some parts of Kosala were grabbed by the Cholas from his successor. Utkala's last *Somavasim* ruler, Karnadeva, was overthrown around 1110 AD by the mighty Ganga monarch of Kalinga. Perhaps inspite of defeat, Karnadeva continued his 'caretaker' governance till his death and Utkala was annexed outright in 1118 to Kalinga.

The period is also significant due to the presence of some semi-feudatory states called Mandala states. The Bhanjas ruled over Khinjali and Khijinga mandalas, the Nandodbhavas over Airavata mandala, the Tungas over yamagarta mandala, the Sulkis over Kodalaka mandala, the Gangas over Svetaka mandala and the Mayuras of Banai Mandala. Towards the fag end of 5th century AD, the *Sarabhapuriyas* ruled for a while over parts of Kosala. All these would indicate the period of political instability, when regional balances oscillated due to absence of strong and capable centralizing leadership. Such a trend ended with the advent of the Imperial Gangas.

From the nucleus a local power in 5th century AD, the Eastern Gangas rose to prominence in 1038 AD when its leader Vajrahasta-V became *Mahārājādhirāja* of Kalinga. This Ganga monarch also re-used the title of *Trikalingādhipati* and bolstered up the Ganga power by matrimonial alliances with the Kalachuries and the Ceylonese royal family. His grandson Chodagangdev outsmarted the Vengi ruler, annexed Vengi and Utkal and by 1135 AD, held sway over a mighty empire that extended from the Ganges to the Godavari by 1135 AD. Builder of the mighty Temple of Jagannath at Puri, this Ganga monarch was initially a worshipper of Siva but soon switched over allegiance to Vaisnavism. The influence of Ramanuja on him can be discerned from his other Visnu temples, constructed at Simhachalam, Mukhalingam and Srikurmam as well as the elevated position of goddess Laxmi and Mahaprasad in the temple at Puri. It was after his death in 1147 AD and during the reign of his second son Raghava that poet Jayadeva composed his magnum opus at Puri (*Geetagovindam*). The first Muslim invasion of Orissa came in 1205 AD and the Ganga King Rajaraja III inflicted a crushing defeat on the marauders. During the following reign of Anangabhima Deva the Muslim invasion from the north and the Kalachuri invasion from the west were met successfully and Sonpur region was occupied. The empire was stretched successfully in the south upto the Krishna—thanks to his devotion to Jagannath, Rudra and Durga and, later, exclusively to Lord Jagannath. In a rare gesture of dedication, he consecrated his empire to Lord Jagannath and proclaimed himself as the Lord's deputy (Rauta) and first servitor (*adya sevak*). Building his new capital at Cuttack by 1230 AD, he also built a temple for Jagannath there. Narasimhadeva-I who succeeded his father in 1238 was a chip of the old bloc who totally defeated the Bengal army in Bengal and its outskirts, time and again. This ruler's most immortal contribution was, however, the construction of the Konark temple. Needless to say, temple architecture of Orissa had, by them, come to inject the unique novelties of Kalingan style into the realism of Indian architecture. His son and successor Bhanudeva-I (1264–78 AD) is credited to have appointed Narahari Tirtha (disciple of Madhavacharya) as a governor. Anangabhimadeva's daughter Chandrikadevi got the Ananta Basudeva Temple (1278) built at Bhubaneswar. The travail was inconspicuous from his death (1287) till 1324 AD when the army of the Delhi Sultan was successfully repulsed by Bhanudeva-II, grandson of Bhanudeva-I. Weak successors, friction with Bengal, Jaunpur, Malva and the Reddys led finally to the collapse of the Ganga power. Luckily, power passed from the last Ganga ruler Bhanudeva-IV to the hands of his dynamic general Kapileswara Rautray, who belonged to a family of feudatory chiefs that has served the Gangas for generations.

Never in the history of mankind has usurpation of political power been so beneficial to the people and state by the classificatory parameters of effectivity and justification. Kapilendra founded the rule of the Solar dynasty (Suryavansa) in 1435 AD, repulsed the Bengal invasions, nipped internal disorder of some feudatories, put to blush the Reddys and Vijayanagara and came to conquer territories that put Orissa at its biggest ever size that stretched from the Ganges to the Kaveri. And all these came in less than three decades. Kapilendradeva is the architect of modern Orissa and the first to use the name 'Odisha' for his empire. Orissan culture was made into a living culture, with a capacity to fertilize and be fertilized in turn with new ideas and forms concerning their salient structural and cultural components intellectual curiosity and interests, hypotheses and convictions mingled with delegation of futurity to open new vistas for posterity. Kapilendra was an object specimen of it, endowed with extensive political and military power and benevolence combined with qualities like purity, charity, truthfulness, valour, magnanimity, munificence, bravery, kindness and religious tolerance. This monarch held highest status in the empire, rendered law and justice and was responsible for the maintenance of internal peace and external security, wielding economic prosperity of the people and epitomising the religious sanctity of the state. Plato and Kautilya would pale into insignificance by the Kapilendra example, which successive *Suryavamsi Gajapati* (ruler) rulers strained to uphold and improve—under the sanguine influence of the cosmopolitanism of Jagannath-culture.

At the apex of power by 1464, having annexed the entire Telengana and the Chandragiri region of Vijayanagara, he justifiably assumed the proud connotative title of '*Gajapati Gaudesvara Navakoti Karnata Kalabargesvara* (the royal epithet of Orissa as the Lord of elephants and the overlord of Bengal, Vijayanagara and Gulbarga). The Bahamani Kingdom was thus not spared by him. In the fag end of his life, however, bitterness prevailed due to quarrels of succession in the teeth of vengeful neighbouring powers. Before his death in 1468, he anointed his favourite son Purusottamadev as the emperor. The founder of the *Suryavamsi* rule in Orissa owed his success to his military might and the unwavering loyalty of all to him. The first real Oriya monarch, he named his empire as '*Odishā Rājya*', proclaimed Jagannath as the State-Deity, established Brahmin villages, wrote a Sanskrit treatise called *Parasurāma Vijaya* and encouraged the growth of Oriya vernacular literature as a result of which Sarala Das, the pioneer Oriya literature, wrote *Mahābhārata* in Oriya poetry. His much vaunted successor Purusottama Deva (1468–97) was an apology of his peerless father. Torn asunder by civil war among rival brothers, Orissa came to lose Rajmundry, Kondapalli and Udayagiri in the south and even the new *Gajapati* was deposed for a time. But the valiant *Suryavamsi* spirit helped an undaunted Purusottama to regain the lost territories and prestige. In the evening of his life, he devoted himself to promotion of religion and culture. The Jagannath *Dharma* had assumed pan-Indian proportions by this time due to its '*sanātana*' substance and syncretism. Legend associated the Lord with the Kanchi-Kaveri conquest and the 'Padmavati' episode which climaxed in the southern princess finally getting married to a person performing 'mental' work on the Chariot of Lord Jagannath—the King

Purusottama. A shrewd tactician and a competent general, Purusottamadeva was adroit in statecraft. A pious, virtuous and magnanimous ruler, he was a scholar in his right and is credited with the composition of sanskrit works like *Abhinava Gita Gobinda* and *Nāma Mālikā.* His son and successor Pataparudradeva (1497–1538) was however destined to preside over the gradually crawling declivity of *Suryavamsi* rule. The empire was contracted to a Kingdom owing to loss of territories though it still stretched from the Ganges to the Krishna. The resurgence of Vijayanagara under Krishnadeva Raya largely accounted for it. Yet, in the field of religion, literature and culture, his reign remains remarkable. The permeating universality of Lord Jagannath, the typical representation of the Veda-inspired Orissan Vaisnavism with its concept of the void as expostulated by its famous five (*Panchasakhā*), the amorous dalliance of Chaitanya's 'Bhaktism', the intensity of philosophy in Rai Ramananda Pattanayak were all capped by the King himself who was 'the master of all arts and the repository of sixty four kinds of learning'. The death of this monarch coincided with the loss of territory south of the Godavari and with internecine strife commencing with the scheming Govinda Vidyadhar (Minister) who later successively murdered the two sons of the deceased Prataparudra to usurp the throne for himself and his 'Bhoi' dynasty (from 1540 to 1560). History repeated itself when, amidst the threats of foreign invasion of Orissa and within a span of two decades, the governor of Cuttack usurped power and started his reign in 1560. The usurper is Mukundadeva, known by the epithet of 'Telenga' because of his Chalukya origins. Mukundadeva struck a rapport with the Moghul Emperor Akbar against the common enemy—the Afghan ruler of Bengal, Orissa and Delhi also came to have ambassadorial exchanges. Bengal invasion, repeatedly thwarted, could not be resisted in 1568 due to internal dissentions with feudatories and no assistance from Moghuls who were then busy in occupying Chittor. Mukundadeva lost his life at hands of a feudatory who was himself killed later by the Afghans. Orissa thus saw the fall of its medieval Hindu power and now passed on to alien Afghan hands. This year, 1568 AD is a virtual dividing-line between the glorious and gloomy periods of Orissan history. The glorious traits of its history till then have been blazed by its political vitality, economic strength out of commercial and maritime vibrancy, artistic and architectural splendour of inimitable parlance, the mystic rhythm of Odissi dance and music, the scholastic excellence of its literature and above all, the enmeshing pan-Indianism of Jagannath-*Dharma* which had permeated the will and intellect of all including the non-conformists. Yet the break with the glorious past *per se* seems to be its retribution out of the 16th century complacency.

While the Afghan rule held sway over Bengal and Bihar and now Orissa, the Bengal Sultan's vacillating acceptance of Delhi's Suzerain authority brought inevitable friction for nearly a quarter century at the end of which the whole of Bengal *Subāh* along with Orissa came under the Moghul ruler by courtesy of Raja Man Singh. Akbar's sanguine rule brought semi-autonomous status; under Jahangir Orissa was constituted into a separate province in 1607. But shelter given by Orissa to the rebellious Shah Jahan during his princely days to escape the wrath of Nur Jahan spoiled her (Orissa's) cause. The Moghuls also virtually dismembered Orissa. Its unitary nature was lost, and the cumulative result of this was the adverse impact on her integrity and stability throughout the 150 years' gamut of its history under the Moghuls. The land-settlement introduced by Raja Todarmal in Orissa did more harm than good. Trade, commerce and cottage-Industry declined, much to the happiness of the British East India Company that was permitted to function in Orissa from Jagatsinghpur and Pipili (near the Subarnarekha). The Moghuls made no serious efforts at religious conversion, rather the exuberance of the secular synthesis of the period (through Satya Pir and Satyanarayana, Salabega and Amir Ali, *Mahāprasād* brotherhood and *Sirini, Pālā* and *Tamāshā*, Qadm-Rasool and Kabir-*chaurā* etc.) embellished Orissa and even influenced its literature and social life.

Aliverdi Khan, the Nazim of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, took over after the decline of Moghul power but got fed up, in spite of repeated successes against Maratha incursions into the region, with affairs of Orissa, and handed it over to the Marathas through the treaty (1751 AD) with the Bhonsla-chief Raghuji Bhonsla. The Marathas ruled over Orissa till 1803. Orissa had been bifurcated to Moghulbandi (directly administered) and Garjat (under 24 feudatory chiefs) areas, while the Raja of Khurda (erstwhile Raja of Orissa) was reduced to simply the superintendence of the Jagannath Temple and the ecclesiastical overlord of Orissa. The Maratha rule coincides with economic decline through virtual end of trade, but the general allegations of the British attributing this to Maratha misrule and exploitation, is preposterous and ludicrous. Less exploiting and more magnanimous, the Marathas patronised Orissan culture and Jagannath-*Dharma* and substantially encouraged pilgrimage to Puri where they did not even instal a single image of their Lord Vitthal and even developed upon the existing network of roads and ferrys in Orissa. The period saw the efflorescence of Oriya literature. The Marathas were famous for their charitable works and endowments. In a word, the Maratha rule was more beneficial and peaceful than the one that preceded it or followed it.

The British interest in Orissa dates back to 1622 when they set up a trading centre at Hariharpur as one of their first settlements. The *Dewāni* of Orissa acquired by Clive in 1765 amounted only to the Midnapore region. Wellesely was an imperialist who wanted to convert the whole of India into the British empire of India. He also visualized the strategic geo-political significance of Orissa as the stumbling block of a buffer between Madras and Calcutta. Consequent upon the second Maratha War and the treaty of Deogaon (1803) with the Peshwa, the British conquered Orissa consisting of Puri, Cuttack and Balasore district. Puri was the Capital till 1817. There were 16 tributary states (*Mahals*) also in Orissa. The Governor General wanted that Orissa should be taken over without causing an iota of affront on Jagannath, lest such affrontery may upset the imperialist apple-cart. But soon the 'nation of shopkeepers' showed its greedy tongue to wallop the landed property of the Raja of Khurda and his Militia (*Pāiks*) on the pseudo legitimacy of forfeiture. The *'Pāik'* rebellion (1817) came as an inevitable aftermath to such policies and as a precursor to the Great Mutiny of 1857 against the British. The British were quick to admit the resultant rebellion, which was suppressed by them though, as warranting policy-modifications. From 1815 to 1830, the Oriya *Zamindārs* were marginalized by the 'sun-set' law and large number of Bengalis took over. The callous British cared very little for Orissa and, to them, it was just a land-route between Calcutta and Madras. The offended Oriyas resorted to non-payment of tax to the British. From the logicality of Tapang and Balia upsprings to the valiant participation of selfless nationalist Chandana Hazuri (alias Chaki Khuntia) and Surendra Sai in 1857, the typology of nationalist fervour almost reverberated the determination of Himmat Rai (of Puri) who had been one of the five members of Guru Gobind Singh's inaugural *Khālsā*. The great famine of 1866 (*Na-anka-durviksha*) came to apotheosize the nonchalant indifference of the alien rule to the plight of the people of a state most prone to natural calamities.

So consistent was the monochromatic dullness of the British rule that even the atavistic dread of the famine did not galvanise them to action. This confessed "monument of our failure" was due to total failure of the administration, failure to import food-grains or augment own meagre resources even, which was obscured by the blinkers of *laissez-faire* and the lack of transport and communication facilities to prevent starvation-deaths. Hundreds moulded into the soil, thousands awaited similar fates out of hunger. This natural calamity, a slur against humanity, took a heavy toll, 30 per cent of the entire population was obliterated. However, this calamity brought twin side-effects, rousing Oriya sentiments to expand their cognitive energy henceforth in not only bewailing the status quo but demanding amelioration and injecting into the alien administration a dose of pragmatic response to obvious local needs. Education came to get a boost through Zilla Schools and college, press came to be established initially out of motives of evangelization, transport and communication improved with roads and railways and telegraph and irrigation and other preventive measures undertaken to forestall any recurrence of such eventualities.

A silver-lining of post-famine period was that it springboarded Oriya movement for self-assertion and realization of imperative needs of nationalism against the alien rule. The awareness of how greed, attachment and *laissèz-faire* concepts fundamentally structured the British rule came as the Oriya perception of reality that made them realize that the work of special transformation cannot proceed without revolutionizing the consciousness of the Oriya elite and people. The *Utkal Sabhā* (1882) started the process as a forum for analysis of political issues and needs—three years before the Congress (INC) was born. The Peoples' Association at Balasore and *Utkal Hitaiśini Sabhā* at Berhampur took up similar gauntlets of public assertion and protest finally climaxing into the *Utkal Sammilani* (1903). Spearheaded by Madhusudan Das and Gopabandhu Das, the Oriya movement gained credible momentum also through the press. The *Utkal Dipikā* (1866) was the pioneer under the stewardship of Gouri Sankar Ray, closely followed by *Sambād Vātikā* and *Bodhadāyinee* from Balasore, *Sambalpur Hitaisini* from Bamanda as well as *Utkal Hitaisini* (1869). *Utkal Darpan* (1873) and *Madhupa* (1878) and finally climaxing in Gopabandhu's *Samāj* (1991). "Much of the progress in the form of opening of Railways, establishment of schools and colleges, formation of cultural associations, and in the building up of an economic infrastructure in Orissa was based on the demands ventilated by the periodicals then and now. By the end of nineteenth century, the social and educational changes were quite noticeable". A galaxy of literary geniuses—from Chandana Hazuri, Fakirmohan Senapati, Radhanath Ray and Madhusudan Rao to Gangadhar Meher, Nandakishore Bal, Biswanath Kar, not forgetting Madhusudan Das and the five valiant crusaders of Satyabadi—sowed literary seeds on the fertile soil of Orissan consciousness; remarkable was the harvest.

A dismembered and divided Orissa had been brought under British rule in 1803, its southern states attached to Madras, Midnapore to Bengal, and Sambalpur to Nagpur. Sambalpur was merged into Orissa in 1905, thanks to the Oriya movement and the advice of Curzon for linguistic amalgamation of regions which was later taken up by Madhusudan Das and Gopabandhu Das, though for a time it was cold-shouldered by people like Dr. H.K. Mahtab in early 1930s. Commonness of race, language and culture has been the consistent argument of the Oriyas behind their legitimate demand for amalgamation of all Oriya speaking tracks. The formation of Bihar and Orissa as one province (1912) was as inscrutable as the decision of that year to keep Ganjam and Vizagapatanam outside Orissa. The ex-states of Gangpur and Banei from Chota Nagpur Division and Patna, Sonepur, Kalahandi, Bamanda and Redhakhol from Central Provinces had been amalgamated by 1905—primarily due to the Oriya movement. Years of wrangles and hassles—through Montagu Chelmsford Report, Philip-Duff Committeee, O'Donnell Committee and the Round Table Conference—finally culminated in "The Government of India (Constitution of Orissa) Order, 1936" that became effective on 1 April 1936, Orissa was re-born on that day. The *Garjāts* (numbering 26 princely states) would be merged into Orissa immediately after Indian independence. The exception of Sareikala and Kharswan as well as Midnapore from Orissa continues to be a lamentable irritant.

Singular fidelity to national interests has been a consistent and laudable tenet of Orissa's role in the freedom struggle of India. The culture of Orissa being always synonymous with the culture of Jagannath, Chandana Hazuri is the pivot of this nationalist sentiment. This selfless valiant crusader of India's liberation from British yoke played a yeoman role in 1857. Surendra Sai, his contemporary, did not lag behind. The politico-cultural organizations spearheaded the Oriya movement, the process being tinctured by passive support for Congress and active anarchism of Bagha Jatin and his tribe of anti-government terrorists.

The 'Satyabadi' movement was the cradle of socio-political and cultural awareness for the nationalist cause. Growth of caste-less, secular, vocational and modern education was its forte from 1909 to 1928. The *Utkal Sammilani's* decision to merge into the national mainstream in 1920-21 was followed by Gandhi's visit to Orissa. Not only the Congress became strong in Orissa, but the Non-cooperation Movement was a stupendous success here also. The women leaders of Orissa, like Sarala Devi and Rama Devi, shunned the cosy comforts of home to jump into the national fray-setting an example that came as a sharp crack across the bustle of conservatism that used to regard the woman as *'Pardānashin'*. Agrarian and anti-feudal uprisings as at Kanika, Bamanda, Dhenkanal, Talcher, Nilgiri and tribal upsprings as at Daspalla added to the unity and solidarity of purpose and the objective of 'self-determination' at the cost of the oppressor. Major Bazelgette's murder in 1939 at Nayagarh pales into insignificance and obscurity in the teeth of blatant, inhuman British bestiality at Eram (Balasore), Inchudi, Gop and the hanging of tribal leader Lakshman Nayak. But ever since the Civil Disobedience Movement right through the Quit India Movement till Indian independence in 1947 and the merger of the princely states into Orissa, the Oriyas solidly stood by the processual and contextual dimensions of acculturation and structural imperatives of nationalist movement.

The cultural milieu of Orissan history has been largely constituted by a cosmopolitanism. The social attitude of Orissa has always remained flexible towards its sustenance, reaping the benefits of a more indulgent dispensation right from the beginnings of syncretism through Jagannath-*Dharma* upto Moghul, Christian (19th and 20th centuries), Brahmo (1869) and other cultural miscellany. The politics of identity groups based on caste, ethnic, religious and minority identities with their supposed exclusive functions has been nothing more than pernicious nonsense in the travail of Orissan history. Noble conceptions and their execution have been consistent tenets of Jagannath-culture helping to mould Orissan history in transcendent excellence that has seldom been radical or insular. The richness of Orissa's almost-inexhaustible economic resources would appear as an anathema *vis-á-vis* the poverty of its people. The benign smile and obsidian eyes of Lord Jagannath would appear to know the answer as to whether the cultural conscientization for a relationless state of external felicity of its people or the oppressive reality of bunglings by the powers that be accounts for the irony that Orissa is rich and the Oriyas, poor.

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Tagore in the Context of Postcolonialism

I. Introduction

Cultural identity remains a strong ground of resistance to the political/commercial hegemony of forces ranged against pluralism. As part of this 'assertion' or 'resistance', culture is increasingly being defined through variegated parameters.

During the days of colonization, culture was a potent symbol of protest as well as cooption. Postcolonial theory premises itself largely on what it perceives as *acculturation* arising out of a policy of *diffusion*—which aimed at the expansion of European culture throughout the colonies; as distinct from the *evolutionary* approach where parallel developments emerge out of interaction. Hoebel defines acculturation as a "process of interaction between two societies by which the culture of the society in subordinate position is drastically modified to conform to the culture of the dominant society".[1] A large section of scholars of postcolonialism view the Indian Renaissance in this light. Irrespective of shades of left or right such theorists are suspicious of the Orientalists who were the prime movers of the evolutionary approach.

From one point of view the reconstruction of the past is construed as resistance to an alien political power; from another, it may involve perpetuation of an indigenous social order smothering inner currents of change, and thus an oppressive native corollary to foreign domination, guilty of fostering an unjust system. It may also be viewed as a subtle endeavour at sharing the loaves of office/patronage.

Others may be inclined to detect trends contrary to those mentioned above: viewing it as a capitulation to alien influence, jettisoning indigenous culture in the garb of reviving it, and so would label it as an accessory to acculturation in aid of the 'other'. To them, allegations of unjust oppressive forces existing within the indigenous structure are unfounded and subversive.

The Indian Renaissance has been seen in all these hues, and more. Many who suspect the motives of the orientalists, also tend to cast aspersions on the Indian thinkers of that period who had associated with them in an endeavour at social reform. For them this process is vitiated *ab initio.*

However, the Indian Renaissance does not yield itself to easy categorization. The apparent contradictions in the formulations of many of the major protagonists were indicative of their attempt to revitalize/modernize Indian society, as well as to resist the 'quicksand of modernization'. The recurrent motifs in the ideas, say, of a Tagore, form intricate tapestry of a tradition/modernity; nationalism/globalism; physical/metaphysical; abstract/concrete; and intuitional/rational. As outlined by Raychaudhury:

> Central to the intellectual and moral concerns of that time was the attempt to grapple with the colonial experience. Self conscious emotional and intellectual exercises to work out a *modus vivendi* in a situation perceived to be humiliating generated other related efforts: evaluating the west, introspection into the strength and weaknesses of the Indian tradition and its true character and agenda for reconstructing Indian Society. The end results were of course not uniform, but there are identifiable regularities in the thought patterns of modern India's founding fathers.... Tagore's thinking on the themes mentioned above can be located squarely within the tradition of nineteenth century Bengali thought from Rammohan to the poet's contemporary, Vivekananda.[2]

But as so often with 'orientalism', it is not the actual reality but the West's opinion that has largely created the conventional image of Tagore.

Today, many of the concepts formed in the last two centuries are under review (as in the hands of postcolonial critics). It is even alleged by many, that most of these concepts were out of tune with the greater Indian reality, and betrayed the logic of history. But, may we remember: the problem of violent cultural identity draws on the interpretation/misinterpretation of the past; and that occasionally, the demonization of ideas/individuals on premises drawn from a particular ideology leads towards the indirect legitimization of an ideology viscerally opposed to it.

Before examining Tagore's *locus standi* vis-á-vis the various concepts of colonial transaction, I would, in a conscious and vain imitation of the *Nyaya* philosophers very briefly review postcolonial critique, with special reference to four central figures in the 'culture of resistance': James Conolly, Frantz Fanon, Amilcar Cabral, and Edward Said.

II Postcolonialism and the Culture of Resistance

Postcolonialism has come to be accepted as a broad based thought process which contains in itself an amazing variety of experience. Despite assumptions to the contrary, it is also perceivable that there was no essential 'political disjunction' between anti-colonialism and postcolonialism to the extent that in many ways the latter was almost an extension of the former: This is maintained by Robert Young:

> This decentered anti-colonial network, not just a Black Atlantic, but a revolutionary, Black, Asian and Hispanic globalization with their own dynamic countermodernity, were constructed in order to fight global imperialism, in the process demonstrating for our times that 'globalization' does not necessarily involve irresistible totalization.[3]

Most of the theories of postcolonial action originated in the West but they were modified by the experience of anti–colonial movement in three continents—Latin America, Africa and Asia. This 'tri-continental' experience resurfaced on the political territory of the West, manifesting itself in the challenge to Western institutions of power, in May 1968. The challenge was aimed at the heart of Eurocentricism, disturbing the Ivy League universities with contrary assumptions of the self and society, aiming to 'undo the ideological heritage of colonialism not only in the decolonized countries, but also in the West itself'.[4] Postcolonialism still sees itself as having undertaken a task yet 'unfinished'. It is not simply the outcome of a novel/revolutionary concept of the intercourse of cultures, but a syllogistic evolution of an intellectual engagement:

> ...while culture as representation of experience, and cultural critique as challenge of its determinants, has always constituted a central preoccupation for anti and post–colonial theory, its emphasis on cultural issues is also the result of some unfinished business of anti-colonialism.[5]

Ironically, while engaging in 'acts of historical retrieval', in rejuvenating native culture and its symbols, indigenous intellectual traditions and histories of popular protest, postcolonialism, at the same time, retains its suspicion of narratives which appear to it as elitist, even when based precisely on the themes mentioned above. These narratives are supposed to harbour unholy ambitions, of silencing the authentic and hitherto unheard voice of the subaltern. This *ambiguous space* occasionally appears as a beguiling shadow ground: a resistance seems to lose its authenticity among revelations of hegemony and conspiracy, gender and caste bias, spiritual and communal predispositions, and so on. The perspective of post facto evaluation renders even original voices defunct. However, the risk of a different kind of ideological hegemony or tyranny of taste is also quite tangible and real. Tasting with a 'jaded palate' may cause things to lose their delicate savour. Overmuch suspicion tends to dilute the intensity and narrow the scope of analysis.

At the same time, it is incontestable that postcolonial critique has also concerned itself with divergent issues within the broad framework of the interface of religion and culture in 'new nationalisms', with issues such as outlined in Young: "state violence;

the contemporary polities of identity...of antiracism and liberal multiculturalism...and the often hidden histories of oppression of other indigenous minorities and nomadic peoples".[6]

The gradual replacement of the Anglophone analysis centred on historical, economic and political issues, by the Francophone emphasis on the 'subjective realms', proved to be of germinal importance in this discourse. The cultural and psychological effects of colonialism experienced by the subject peoples became the focus of study. But within these broad categories there are subtle variations. Violence as political action formed a crucial component of many of these outlines. And Algeria with its experience of the most appalling violence forms a focus for many analysts. Algerian colonialism almost becomes a separate category, with its violent apotheosis:

> The Algerian war constituted one of the most chilling, violent episodes in the entire history of anticolonial activism. Its hyper ventilating violence always formed part of the original policy of the FLN campaign and equally of the French response. The extent and degree of atrocities on both sides, carried out on men, women and children alike, makes sickening reading. Violence, in many ways, is too clean and cerebral a word, too surrounded with the dignity of philosophical conceptualization, to describe the raging sadistic and sickening butchery of what went on in Algeria.[7]

French intellectuals were shocked at the brutality resorted to by their countrymen to repress a native struggle and a crisis erupted in the discourse of anti/postcolonialism which continues to persist till this day. Sartre advocated the use of violence by the Algerians. The gamut of the experiences of the Algerian war of independence in a way straddles the theoretical world of postcolonialism. The dynamics of this violence—termed *Algeriance* by Helene Cixous—is mirrored in the writings of Fanon, Memmi, Bourdieu, Althusser, Lyotard, Derrida and Cixous herself, all of them scarred, having spent part of their lives in violence ridden, fear driven Algeria.

Being a settler colony of the French, Algeria became a territory of exploitation of a degree wherein the natives were sought to be systematically prevented from even the semblance of participation in the political, economic system. The draconian *code de l'indigénat* made the Muslims punishable for many acts of otherwise lawful dissent, which were construed to be treasonable or illegal. The *code* also contained provisions for confiscation of property. French occupation oversaw the liquidation of the once flourishing school system. The destruction of Algerian society was accompanied by massive French colonization. The huge population of the French settlers or colons in Algeria demanded that it be assimilated as an integral part of France. However, the French army resisted the transfer of the power of governance to the colons, as it wanted to rule Algeria directly.

Through a series of convoluted developments, the Algerian demands ultimately came to be spearheaded by variegated associations of the Algerian elite.[8] The French educated section did not favour complete independence, only demanding equal opportunities in jobs etc. Its spokesman Farhat Abbas stated: "I have questioned history; I have questioned the living and the dead; I have visited the cemeteries. The empires of the Arabs and Islam are in the past; our future is decisively linked to that of France."[9] The other sections of the Algerian elite advocated a pan Arabic Muslim identity for their country men. With minor variations they favoured conformism to the principles of Islam, and the adaptation of Islamic scriptural rules to the contemporary Algerian national situation. These reform movements were not seeking to encourage religious interaction between Christianity and Islam, on the contrary, they sought to return to the fundamentals of Islam, favouring a leaner and more vibrant form of it which they hoped would revitalize the Arabs. There was a clear political design behind the irreligious programme. The schools, organized and run by the reformists, were in the late forties and early fifties actively training militant volunteers committed to the nationalist movement.[10] This is in stark contrast with what obtained for the socio-religious reform movement in India. In a rebuttal to the declaration by Abbas, the reformist leader

Ben Badis proclaimed, "this Muslim nation is not France, it is not possible for it to be France. It does not want to become France, and even if it wanted to, it could not".[11]

Under the *code de l'indigénat* of 1874, Algerians had to renounce Islam and convert to Christianity to become eligible for French citizenship, and so gain limited access to a modicum of civil rights, and the right of franchise. For years, the allurement, that French citizenship for educated Muslims could be a possibility, had been held out towards a small group of the Algerian elite, but when the Blum-Violette proposal—providing French citizenship to Algerians without their having to renounce Muslim Civil law—was jettisoned in 1938, the Algerian liberals joined the Islamic reformists, and Farhat Abbas, issuing the Manifesto of the Algerian People in 1943, demanded the ending of all forms of colonial rule, to be replaced by a participatory self government open to Muslims. The colons had subverted the official French position, and their clout had grown to unmanageable proportions, to enable them to dictate a policy of repression, almost manically so. The strangled native voices tended to find expression against the policy of *assimilation* in violence as articulated by Fanon.

Fanon: High priest of Violent Struggle

The high priest of violent struggle, Fanon agreed with Sartre and Memmi that violence degrades the victim as well as the perpetrator, but justified it on the premise that violence provided both 'political advantage and self respect'. His glorification of the young terrorists and their acts of sabotage, conflates with his denial of non-violence as a path of struggle for the 'people', as only a westernized elite was suited to practice it; and his representation of 'national consciousness' as a mere 'pitfall'. Categorization of decolonization as being "always a violent phenomenon", flows from his overarching description of the nature of colonization outlined by him: "...colonialism is not a thinking machine, nor a body endowed with reasoning facilities. It is violence in its natural state, and it will only yield when confronted with greater violence."[12]

Inexplicably, ideas generated by (perhaps understandable) conditions in a particular region, transformed themselves into a form of universal doctrine of anti-colonialism backed by the philosophical prestige of individuals like Sartre. But, notwithstanding Sartre's suggestion that 'reform is a matter for the Algerians themselves after independence', is there any lesson for us in the subsequent corruption of the FLN regime that set up independent Algeria?

Cabral: Culture Resistance & Liberation

Amilcar Cabral, unlike Fanon, understood the untranslatability of local ideas which were specific to certain conditions. This realization of his in Guinea–Bissau under the Portuguese, led to the understanding: "The still living culture of a people, which had proved a prime instrument of resistance throughout colonial history now forms an intrinsic part of the liberation movement."[13] However, Cabral is deeply suspicious of the colonialist project of construction/ reconstruction of the history and culture of the colonized nation:

> The practice of imperialist rule...demanded (and still demands) a more or less accurate knowledge of the society it rules and of the historical reality (both economic, social and cultural) in the middle of which it exists. This knowledge is necessarily expressed in term of comparison with the dominating subject and with its own historical reality. Such a knowledge is a vital necessity in the practice of imperialist rule.[14]

Echoes of this view can be heard in later critics like Vishwanathan.[15] For Cabral the necessity of such a project testified to the cultural resilience of 'people'. Cultural renaissance, in his opinion, became a necessity only for the subject elite, not so much for the masses who have preserved their tradition:

> It is also the result of this effectiveness of cultural resistance of the people, who when they are subjected to political domination

> and economic exploitation find that their own culture acts as bulwark in preserving their identity.[16]

Political liberation does not create a cultural identity; rather it is created by the resilient culture of the native masses.

Looking back into these variegated strands of anti-colonialism in recent history, one can conclude that the inclination for aggressive action vis-a-vis an atrocious political situation virtually forced hardness upon the revolutionaries. They seem to be caught perforce in this trap of heartless cruelty and violence. Sensitive individuals as they were, they surely would have felt nostalgic for a more humane struggle. As Brecht had, in his characteristic way said in a slightly different context:

> We who wanted to prepare the ground for kindness could not be kind ourselves.

Connolly: Schism in the Soul

The schism in the soul is illustrated poignantly in James Connolly: desiring a parliamentary/democratic path to a socialist, free Irish state, desperate that the erstwhile originator of democracies was not willing to stop acculturation or grant self-rule to its colony. Ireland was in many ways an emotive issue for England and ever since Cromwell, blood had been shed to subjugate a land which England felt was rightfully hers, although the Celtic tradition would not submit to indoctrination. Connolly, in his attitude to violence, unlike Fanon, his co-traveller across time, is ambivalent towards the cult of the bomb. In parenthesis one recalls Tagore's visceral opposition to violent assertion. Coming back to Connolly, unlike Fanon, he did not believe that violence was universal, nor did he subscribe to the theory that it was an 'existential form of colonial experience'.

His support of the rebellion of 1916 surprised and saddened many of his contemporaries. The uprising failed, and the dismay of some of his compatriots at the bloodshed is reflected in Yeats' "Easter 1916": 'A terrible beauty is born'.

Perhaps the cultural tradition that Connolly was able to summon, enabled him, unlike Fanon, to retain a historicized/pragmatic view towards violent assertion shorn of all external glorification. He wrote in 1899:

> Our position towards [physical force] is that use or non-use of force for the realization of the ideas in progress always has been and always will be determined by the attitude, not of the party of progress but the governing class opposed to that party.... [if that party is consistently violent]... then, but not till then, the party which represents the revolutionary idea is justified in ....using the weapons of force to dislodge the usurping class or government in possession.[17]

However in 1915 Connolly acknowledged in a different view:

> ... 'those who live by the sword shall perish by the sword' say the scriptures, and it may well be that in the progress of events the working class of Ireland may be called upon to face the stern necessity of taking the sword (or rifle) against the class whose rule has brought upon them and upon the world the hellish horror of the present European war.[18]

The abortive attempt ended with cruel suppression, Connolly himself suffered a mortal gunshot wound, and even while he lay dying of gangrene, to make him a lesson for aspiring revolutionaries, the military courtmartialled him on a hospital bed, took him on a stretcher to Kilmainham Jail (Dublin), tied him to a chair and shot him. The bitterness of anti-colonial struggle is reflected in his poem 'The legacy: The Dying Socialist to his Son'. Some lines are quoted below:

> They held our lands, our bodies ruled, and strove to rule the mind/And Hell itself could not surpass their evil to mankind/
> And all who strove for human rights to break their cursed yoke/
> The noblest of our race, my child, went down beneath their stroke.[19]

Said: Orientalism and its Protean Shades

From these activists/revolutionaries we come to a major theoretician: "The introduction of the idea that Colonialism operated not only as a form of military rule but also simultaneously as a discourse of domination was the achievement of Edward Said."[20]

Said has commanded enormous academic influence among postcolonial critics across the globe. But his generalizations are not necessarily universally applicable. There is merit in his presumption that, the political identity of the scholars of the Orient is a prime determinant in their concepts—the scholar 'comes up against the orient as a European or American first as an individual second'. Early on in *Orientalism*, acknowledging beforehand what he terms a controversial statement, he nevertheless says: "...all academic knowledge about India and Egypt is somehow tinged and impressed with, vitiated by the gross political fact—and that is what I am saying in this study of Orientalism." *Orientalism* is however heavily influenced by the antagonistic relationship between Christianity and Islam. The Indian Orient he wrote, "...could be treated by Europe with such proprietary hauteur—never with the sense of danger reserved for Islam," the proprietary hauteur however did not preclude the less than respectable status accorded to Sanskrit among the "Oriental languages" to be rectified only later by William Jones, whose "interest in India came to him by way of his prior interest in and knowledge of Islam."[21]

Subsequently, Said recorded a protest against the indiscriminate "lumping" of orientalist writings and against bracketing them "together as rotten and worthless imperialism" reminding his readers "I never did that anyway. It is benighted to say that Orientalism is a conspiracy or to suggest that the West is evil."[22]

Moreover, the bearings of *Orientalism*, discussed by Said towards the close of his book, and elaborated in the 'Afterword' appended to the later editions, raise issues about the study of culture, which seem to presage a movement beyond the theoretical constraints which many of his co-brethren of Academia appear to labour with. Said's encomiums for the 'group of remarkable scholars and researchers led by Ranajit Guha' for rescuing 'the writing of Indian history from the domination of the nationalist elite' and for revolutionizing historiography, obscure the fact that, these scholars are not only analysing the West's role in enslaving the mind of the East, they are, in a significant departure from Said, analysing the role of the nationalist elite in perpetuating an unequal system in their native culture and country. It is not only the Orientalist who is sought to be placed under scrutiny with the help of the tools provided by Said, but the Oriental himself. Whether the provider of such tools would subscribe to this wholesale usage, in view of the considerable distinction between specimens of oriental theory and of oriental situations, is another theoretical conundrum. This conundrum is further complicated by such assertions by Said as:

> Nor is there much similarity between what obtains among Western experts in Sinology and Indology and the fact that many professional scholars of Islam in Europe and the United State spend their lives studying the subject, yet still find the religion and culture impossible to like, much less admire.[23]

Said had buttressed his charge against Orientalism in the Middle East citing examples such as Taha Hussain. Hussain, presumably being overawed by the West and in his anxiety to identify with his 'betters' had defined Arab culture as being European not Eastern, to register "the identity of the Egyptian cultural elite, of which he was so distinguished a member".[24] It need hardly be said that there is no corresponding analogy of any distinguished Indian saying during the Indian Renaissance, that Indian culture was European and not Eastern.

Some questions raised by Said involve a transcending of prefabricated categories:

> How does one represent other cultures? What is another culture? Is the notion of a distinct culture (or race, or religion, or civilization) a useful one, or does it always get involved either in self-congratulation (when one discusses ones own) or hostility and aggression (when one discusses the "other")?[25]

It is possible to perceive the utter sincerity of the thinkers engaging with these issues in the Indian Renaissance. For them, the definitions of culture had as their touchstones, "human freedom and knowledge". Knowledge of the West, freedom from the West as well as from the shackles of the past, many of them forged previously within the East, were among their concerns. Said has decried "donnish abstractions", and commented how the orientalism he talks about "failed to identify with human experience, failed also to see it as human experience".

The tradition of Tagore saw culture not as a strait jacket but as evolving. The core of his views was not encrusted by dogmatic accretions, and so not in need of being subjected to the temporal whims of the age. He and his kind were hardly coopted into the imperial designs of those, whom some enlightened critics may perceive to be the spokesmen of their 'white masters'. Extensive travel was the source of their knowledge of cultural practices. Views arising out of "concrete human history and experience", are not perhaps amenable to easy classification, into arbitrary, ideological pigeon holes. Said would not quarrel with Tagore's tradition; indeed he appreciates him greatly in his later work, *Culture and Imperialism.*

Tagore represents an 'independent critical consciousness' for both the Orient and Orientalism.

III Indian Responses to Colonialism

The three models of colonialism discussed above represent with some variations, three major types: Europe colonizing Africa; Europe colonizing the Middle East; and a European nation embarked on a task of subjugating and assimilating a nation within Europe. All the three models appear to be inalienable from the general nature of colonialism—where men engage in enslaving not only lands but minds. The different forms that anti-colonialism took in these models present an illuminating backdrop to an analysis of hegemony and resistance.

Different Colonizations in Different Lands

The models discussed so far have violence as a pervasive presence. Even the prescribed panacea heightened antagonism and bloodshed. Tagore provides a refreshing counter theme. Occasionally there are similarities, mostly between Irish and Indian experiences. Both British colonies, the bitter pain from the suppression of protest stirred kindred emotions. One poignant example was the message of condolence received at the death of young Jatin Das, who died in prison, while on hunger-strike running 63rd day demanding better treatment to political prisoners.[26] It was a message sent by the family of Terence McSwiney, The Lord Mayor of Cork, Ireland, who had died under similar conditions: "Family of Terence McSwiney have heard with grief and pride of the death of Jatin Das. Freedom will come."[27]

But sweeping generalizations indulged in by postcolonial critics have reached epidemic proportions now. Earlier Meenakshi Mukherjee had warned of "the possible risks inherent in the formulation of post-coloniality as the common condition of contemporary civilization cutting across continents, or of making the specific configuration of circumstances in particular regions subservient to a global paradigm."[28]

The literary scene in India was quite different from that in the African colonies where expression in the vernacular is thought to have been stunted, beset by a sort of crisis. Later I shall juxtapose it, in some detail, with Tagore's view. But in India under England, the output of vernacular translations of European classics, say of Shakespeare, were matched with those of the Indian classics originally in Sanskrit.[29] The atmosphere could be called healthy to some extent. As an example, mention may also be made of the fusion of Hindu and Christian themes in literary works in Indian languages. Vallathol wrote *Magdalana Maryam* in Malayalam (1921) in response to a request from a Christian priest; inspiring Asan's *Karuna* and Ulloor's *Pingala*. M. Govinda Pai wrote a poem—*Golgotha* in Kannada (1937), with an authentic Christian ambience. A critic has called it, "a monumental tribute to the merging of the Christian influences and the native tradition, particularly on the coast."[30] There was a vibrant bi-lingual tradition of writing among the greatest intellectuals during that period.

The absence of an overtly corrosive European cultural hegemony in India is highly significant in the light of the view, that, "post-colonial analytical strategies work best where the dispossession of language, religion and culture has been of the most severe order".[31] The racist presumptions of the Christian missionaries had also come to be suitably camouflaged under a bland philanthropism, quite early on in the history of British colonialism. The denouncement of Hinduism and Islam as devilish by the protestant missionaries in the initial stages, was challenged before long: men such as William Miller of Madras Christian College, advocated permeation of Hindu society with Christian values, rather than organized outright conversion; missionaries at a conference in Kolkata formally resolved, "to be more tactful in their preaching—praising whatever they could in the religious life and conduct of Hindus and Muslims and avoiding wholesale denunciation."[32] The question of caste also bedeviled intra-and inter-church relations in India.[33] Many a prominent Hindu convert continued with an ambivalent attitude to the institution of caste, even after conversion. Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya argued in his journal *Sophia* that the caste system had many advantages and that Christian doctrines should be largely Indianized. Scholars have felt that the influence of Advaita philosophy and that of Swami Vivekananda continued to influence Upadhyaya throughout life.[34]

Given this complex background of religious interaction in nineteenth century colonial India it is possible to concur largely with Copley's view:

> The ideology of Mission should be separated from a secular imperialist ideology, though they threatened disastrously to converge by the 1840s and 1850s.... [It was] a 'cluster of ideas', driven by a wish to proselytize and convert.... At its heart lay a formidable, but intellectually narrow, millenarian, exclusivist ideology.[35]

Copley has highlighted the dissonant voice within the establishment on the issue of such an 'exclusivist ideology' and its position in the strategy of the advancement of church influence. Locating missionary attitudes in the context of Orientalism, Anglicism and secularism, he acknowledges that Said is "less concerned with India than the Middle East". For Copley the "recrudescence of cultural relativism, an approach which once again legitimizes a discussion of India in terms of its own distinct social and religious forms,"[36] is an appreciable development. William Jones is rightly seen by him as an "interesting foil to the missionaries", precisely for his unique endeavour to "understand India". In what may well be a unique trend, in India, the relationship between mission and the colonial state was often antagonistic. In his remarkable work on the subject, Copley defines this relationship:

> Missionaries were peculiarly opposed to the way the company took the role of regulator of Indian religions. In their eyes the state became tainted by such an association. It also made their endeavour to overthrow these religions all the more difficult. The colonial state, however, was not to be so easily deviated from its secularist path by these evangelical pressure groups. A particular grievance was the company's protection of temples...[37]

At the same time missionaries such as C.F. Andrews aroused great love and respect in Indians, because of the nobility of their character and their genuine love for the country. Many of them enjoyed the closest of relationship with some of the great Indians of the day. On the other hand, the British government on its part showed no compunction in prosecuting those who openly championed the cause of the Indian masses against the policies of the government. In a remarkable development, Rev. James Long translated Dinabandhu Mitra's *Nildarpan* (1860), a play comparable to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* for its stark realism and humanism, into English as the *Mirror of Indigo*. The translation was proscribed by the government, and Long was fined and jailed. Indian society did not prove to be very amenable to proselytizing, in spite of the interest aroused in many educated

Hindus for Christian philosophy, mainly because of the respect felt by them for Christ's personality, and the humanistic concerns of many missionaries. Raja Ram Mohan Roy published serious studies on Christ's ethical teachings, and his abiding interest in Christian doctrine and in the history of its development, roused great hopes in some Baptist missionaries that they might succeed in converting him. The opposite happened—"he converted one of them to Unitarianism: this was the Reverend William Adam, who was thereafter known in Calcutta as 'the second fallen Adam'."[38]

The Francophone theory of anti-colonialism seeks to understand the cult of the bomb, and it has seen it as a natural outcome of the repressive policies followed by colonizers. It has sought to project a psychoanalytical study of the minds of the protagonists of the violent struggle, and has acquired a distinction of sorts in that field, Fanon himself was a practicing physician described as one: "who has treated the bodies and minds of his fellow-men, his compassion is great"[39].

However, leading Indian thinkers of the Indian movement were not exactly unaware of the different aspects of a violent struggle. Tagore has reflected at length on the effect of violent assertion/extremism on the collective psyche, and on the mind of the individual. There is evidence of at least one proposal for conducting a psychiatric study of the minds of the revolutionaries/terrorists, in the *Autobiography* of Subhas Chandra Bose, the leading proponent of armed uprising in India. Analyzing violent/revolutionary activity in Bengal he wrote:

> Up till now no serious attempt has ever been made to understand the psychology behind the [revolutionary] movement. An important officer of the Government, Lieut. Col. Berkeley Hill, IMS., a well known psychiatrist, who has been for years in charge of a mental hospital in India, once suggested to the government that they should attempt a systematic psychological study of the problem, but his advice was not taken. In the present circumstances of the country it is extremely risky for an honest Indian to volunteer an explanation.[40]

Although Bose's prediliction for violence, does lead him subsequently to make some statements which could be called controversial and which I shall refer to presently on the whole, his analysis of the phenomena of violent protest is quite impressive,[41] and appears more cogent for an understanding of the Indian situation, than many of the writers of the Francophone school. His thesis is: "it would be incorrect to say that the inspiration came from abroad. The movement was born out of a conviction that to a western people physical force alone makes an appeal."[42] This belief finds an echo in Fanon, and can even be correlated to Gandhi's statement on the subject, although his typically lefthanded subscription demolishes the indispensability of force as vouched for by Bose, for whom force would mean primarily physical force.[43] However, Bose's catholicity of vision, setting him apart from Fanon, is expressed in his acknowledgement:

> Revolutionary methods are, in their ultimate analysis an expression of utter despair. If this despair is once removed, an understanding with the revolutionaries is certainly possible. That will not mean that they will cease to be patriots or that they will give up serving their country. It will only mean that they will direct their activities along other channels.[44]

A peaceful way, he accepts, is still possible even within the scheme of colonialism, for bringing about its gradual dissolution/liquidation.

IV Tagore's Vision of India

I have tried to show the presence of more than one strand in postcolonial theory itself. There is a predominance of dead jargon in intellectual discourse today. Tagore is often portrayed by critics as naive and hegemonic. It appears easy enough to do so. William Radice explains:

> Tagore's art is a vulnerable art. Nearly all his writings are vulnerable to criticism, philistinism or contempt, because of his willingness to

> wear his heart on his sleeve, to take on themes that other writers would find grandiose, sentimental or embarrassing, and his refusal to cloak his utterances in cleverness, urbanity or double talk.[45]

His lectures in some of the greatest universities of the world survive the most exacting scrutiny. As E.P. Thomson, Marxist historian, and hard headed thinker said in 1991, "More than any other thinker of his time, Tagore had a clear conception of civil society, as something distinct from and of stronger and more personal texture than political or economic structures."[46] There is a predominance of intuition over analysis in Tagore. He was forthright in putting forward non-conformist views on popular topics, and never shied away from the risk of opprobrium, which indeed was forthcoming in ample measure. A very tentative list of themes that have to be discussed in discussing Tagore's vision of India would be:

(a) India as a land that did not glorify geographical or political nationalism and chose instead to respect man's existential search for the highest ideals of truth;
(b) as a land that saw truth not as objective, scientific law, but as a state to be realized by man, a state of supreme renunciation, self effacement and compassion;
(c) as a land that would see the good and the beautiful in all cultures, be their nest, absorb them into one's body;
(d) as a land that is human, liberal, not arrogant, intolerant, aggressive; that seeks an identity in relationship and not an identity in confrontation;
(e) a land that considered wisdom nor wealth, as the higher human goal; a land that looked upon the Buddha, and the state of *Sanyas* as the highest ideal;
(f) a land critical of its weaknesses, follies, injustices of the past, willing to correct its social and religious aberrations and superstitions;
(g) a land that venerates the great beauties of ancient traditions but does not gather under its flag to fight, despise other traditions;

(h) as a land that did not set out on a quest for the permanence of small limited, finite identities but for a merger of the small in the infinite universal consciousness; and

(i) a land where a life-affirming, deeply ethical mysticism flourished, celebrating the beautiful in the universe and in man.

There is neither space nor is it necessary here to contextually discuss his ideas in detail. That objective, will have to wait for another, larger paper. My endeavour here is to place the yardsticks/concerns of postcolonial analysis in the midst of the narrative—rather than indulge in assertion.

Tagore: A Different Idea of History

Tagore himself had lamented on the tendency of research scholars to ignore the fact that only the living past was interesting, and indulge in scholastic industry which would not make people any the wiser: "I have often felt sad that so much human talent and industry should disappear in the publication of matter whose bones keep on rattling without forming for us an outline of the figure that once moved."[47]

An essay written by him on Indian history, reflects his concern for 'living history'. The essay was originally written in Bengali, *Bharatavarsher Itihasher Dhara*, and read before an audience in 1912, arousing a storm of controversy. The significance of the exposition of the main historical movements of India, was appreciated by Jadunath Sarkar, who undertook to publish an English rendering in *Modern Review* in 1913. Tagore reviewed the comments generated and published an English version, in the *Viswa Bharati Quarterly* in 1923. His mystical and analytical insights merge in his concern for healthy social interaction both between nations, and between communities within nations. There is no dread of being swamped by any civilization with pretensions of superiority:

> We shall know for certain that just as it is futile mendicancy to covet the wealth of others in place of our own, so also to keep ourselves segregated and starved by refusing the gift which is the

> common heritage of man because it is brought to us by a foreign messenger, only make for utter destitution.
>
> Our western critics, whose own people, whenever confronted with non-western races in a close contact, never know any other solution of the problem but extermination or expulsion by physical force, and whose caste feeling against darker races is brutally aggressive and contemptuous, are ready to judge us with a sneering sense of superiority when comparing India's history with their own.... India's problem has been far more complex than that of the west, and I admit that our rigid system of social regulation has not solved it. For to bring order and peace at the cost of life is terribly wasteful, whether in the policy of government or of society.... I love India, not because I cultivate the idolatry of geography, not because I have had the chance to be born in her soil, but because she has saved through tumultuous ages the living words that have issued from the illuminated consciousness of her great sons: *Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam Brahma, Brahma* is truth, *Brahma* is wisdom, *Brahma* is infinite; *Santam, Sivam, Advaitam*, peace is in *Brahma*, goodness is in *Brahma*, and the unity of all beings.[48]

Tagore's portrayal is hardly that of contemporary India, it is that of a *Bharatvarsha* of his dreams, a *Bharatvarsha* which he hopes will one day be. It is the reflection of the eternal values cherished by him. His approach to history is more anthropological than political, drawing mainly on literature to recreate the past. One of his essays evokes the image of Siva—the timeless yogi, while describing the equanimity with which India seems to have weathered the storms of countless upheavals: "Coated with ash from the sacred fire and observing the vow of silence, that Bharata is waiting seated on his outspread deer skin Asana at the crossings of our roads."[49]

His vision of the past encapsulates two themes: the interrelationship of communities, and the crisis of his times; and to him the two were interrelated in turn, because in his view the crisis had been caused by overmuch scepticism and superciliousness on the part of one set of people in understanding the other. The assumption of civilizational superiority by the West was founded on its understanding history as an account of the triumph of man over nature, of the mechanical over the organic. Buoyed up by its technical achievements and military exploits it had evolved a narrative which concentrated on the political victory of the vocal few over the silent many, and this narrative Tagore wanted to repudiate at all cost. Rather than indulge in a bout of assertion, counter assertion, he outlined a history which pointed out a parallel strand of human development, the development of consciousness unsullied by conflicts between races and nations. He was equally sceptical of a section of his own countrymen who had become enamoured of the trifles of modern civilization imported from Europe and the list of trifles included fashionable intellectual ideas. The modern historians left him deeply dissatisfied:

> The history of India that we read and memorize for our examinations is really a nightmarish account of India. Some people arrive from somewhere and the pandemonium is let loose. And then it is a free-for-all: assault and counter assault, blows and blood letting. Father and son, brother and brother vie with these passing frames of dream like scenes, smeared in red, overlaid in it, the real Bharatvarsha cannot be glimpsed. These histories do not answer the question, where were the people of India? As if the people of India did not exist, only those who maimed and killed alone existed.[50]

For Tagore the people of India existed in the villages, and an ideal Indian society had grown around the village, nestled in constructive relationships which were distrustful of fissiparous pursuits for the accumulation of material richness and superficial prestige and social status. But history as it was being told, as it was being taught to be told under modern European impulses, could hardly relate man to the vision of the one reality. In many ways his historical concerns were similar to those of Tolstoy. Tolstoy however was different in his approach. Isaiah Berlin in "The HedgeHog And The Fox", points out the dichotomy between Tolstoy's concept and approach:

> Always and in every situation he looked for 'hard' facts—for what could be grasped and verified by the normal intellect uncorrupted by intricate theories divorced from tangible realities, or by other-worldly mysteries, theological, poetical, and metaphysical alike.[51]

Consequently Tolstoy could not find his way out of his dilemma: his search for a general historical law; his conviction that conventional history, history as science, "will never reveal to us what connections there are, and at what times, between science, art, and morality, between good and evil, religion and the civic virtues."[52] Ever distrustful of the inner beauty of the inscrutable, "what he sees is not the one, but, always with an ever growing minuteness, in all its teeming individuality, with an obsessive, inescapable, incorruptible, all-penetrating lucidity which maddens him, the many."[53]

Tolstoy, like Tagore, was aware that although conventional historical narrative forgets the spiritual-'inner'-events, while imputing importance to 'political'-public-events, yet "it is they—the 'inner' events-that are the most real, the most immediate experience of human beings."[54] Yet Tolstoy could only try to vicariously feel this 'oneness' this 'inner' truth, and to solve this dichotomy between belief and cognizance, by creating a historical situation in *War And Peace*, which was profoundly unhistorical in many ways.[55]

Tagore with his instinctive awareness of the 'one' in the 'many', in his spontaneous acceptance of, and identification with, the living 'mystery' of creation, his delight in the infinite variety and the play of real life, was not subject to the tedium of such dichotomy as beset Tolstoy. He enunciated his vision of man, within a civilizational paradigm—the historical sense of the Orient as distinct from that of the Occident. He reconciled the schism born of comparison of the socio-economic situation between India and the Europe, by breaking the spectrum of modalities which engendered such comparisons and from which judgments accrued. Tolstoy had struggled with the tools of empiricism while seeking to subvert its progeny—the industrial/modern state. Tagore rejected the very concept of a common methodology:

> The superstition that history has to be similar in all countries must be abandoned. The person who has become hardboiled after going through the biography of Rothschilde, while dealing with the life of Christ is likely (to) call for his account books and office diary. And if he fails to find them he will form a very poor opinion of Christ.... Similarly, those who give up all hope of Indian history because they fail to find the royal genealogies and accounts of the conquests and defeats in the 'Indian official record room' and say, 'How can there be any history when there is no politics ?' are like people who look for aubergine in paddy fields. And when they do not find it there, in their frustration they refuse to count paddy as a variety of grains at all. All fields do not yield the same crop. One who knows this and thus looks for the proper crop in the proper field is a truly wise person.[56]

The allegations of kowtowing to a western language/culture are commonly levelled by many postcolonial critics at Indian thinkers who have aimed for a fusion of cultures. They have been frequently condemned for not seeing the problesmatic relation of Europe and its colonies in its entirety/complexity. These charges are however dispelled on even a cursory reading of authors like Tagore. Tagore, for example, effectively exploded the theory of the 'white man's burden' and his 'civilizing mission' quite early in his writings: "If Europe says that every civilization is (the) same and the ideal of that uniform civilization exists only in Europe, it does not make sense to discard with disdain all our treasures in haste the moment we hear this insolent remark."[57] Tagore presented a parallel history of India, in a version which underwent changes over the years in his own hand, almost twenty years after he wrote the early articles on the subject. After reflecting on the theme of history for almost a life time he opined: "Thus we find that History is a plagiarist that steals its own ideas over and over again."[58]

Tolstoy as I said, could escape the blind alley of his empiricism only by personifying his historical vision in the characters of *War And Peace*: some like Pierre and Bezukov whom he created; some like Napoleon who were almost wholly historical; and some like Kutuzov who were historical and fictitious at the same time. Tagore with a different sensibility, and without a shred of self doubt, without having to take recourse to a fictional work created by him, found a character in an extant Indian epic—Ram, "worshipped to this day as an Avatar" because "he strove to bring about the reconciliation between Aryan and non-Aryan."[59]

Tagore's vision is profoundly non-Marxist, rejecting in its initial stages the Darwinian biological doctrine of an inexorable, relentless struggle between protagonists, on which Marx had perhaps drawn his theory of struggle as the core of history. Nevertheless Tagore speaks constantly of a process of social adjustment: "the two epics of India were concerned with the same social revolution, that is to say, with the conflict of the new and the old within the Aryan community."[60]

Rama is presented as the ideal king who embraced Guhaka, the Chandala, setting in motion a commingling of the castes. He explains the Shambuka episode, as an interpolation created much later by conservatives who insulted, "his memory by having it in their rendering of that episode that Rama beheaded with his own hands an ambitious Sudra for presuming to claim equal status in their attainment of spiritual excellence."[61] He likens the interpolators to the "ministers of Christian religion, in the late war, taking Christ's name for justifying the massacre of men."[62] Rama's name is however remembered, "with reverence because he won over his antagonists as his allies and built the bridge of love between Aryan and non-Aryan."[63]

Tagore's narrative of history is radically different from that of a chauvinistic, drum beating type. He does not project Indian civilization as a rival to the European. He merely states the fact that different yardsticks exist for measuring different ethos. His version of ancient Indian history is derived from a harmonised, generous reading of the *Puranas*, which many of his contemporary historians did not accept as a historical source at all. His thesis builds up against the colonialism of the mind that was being attempted by a section of the colonisers. He decisively rejects Eurocentrism in knowledge, using the study and writing of history as a means to do so. However, an air of universalism pervades his critique of Eurocentrism. His defence of the spiritual against the material is evident in the views of many eminent Europeans of the time, also.[64]

The two world wars effectively demolished the claims of the West to be the sole repository of advancement, and the debate is manifest in the sphere of science and culture even now. Tagore along with some other Indian intellectuals of his period sounds prophetic in this context.

Tagore's Interpretation of Kalidasa & Shakespeare

Misunderstanding Tagore's writings on Indian culture has unfortunately now become common. There is neither religious fundamentalism nor social obscurantism in Tagore but an analysis of a complex social problem, without an overt revolutionary tenor. Subtle hints are held out. The subjection of the vision of an artist to an evaluation strictly within the ambit of social science, and that too with the help of its normative tools, sometimes throws up strange results. Tagore had written on the legend of Shakuntala more than once. Analysing one of his expositions, Thapar states: "Nineteenth century nationalism in India is thought to have fostered a conservative attitude towards tradition, because to question it was a concession to western ideas."[65] During her own analysis of the various versions of the legend of Shakuntala as recounted through the ages, she lamented how of all persons, Tagore was to be the one to have declared that the play moved from the gross to the moral union, and to have used in the process terms such as '*patana*' and '*patita*' in association with Shakuntala. Tagore's reading of the legend, appeared to her as being influenced by the perspectives of Indian nationalism and also Orientalism, so that: "In this reading the empowerment of a woman through the birth of her son, which was significant to the epic story, now becomes unimportant."[66] Conceding the point Thapar makes about woman's empowerment through the birth of a male child (with all the resultant implications of gender prioritization), she perhaps misses out on the entire concept of the metaphysical journey through ordeal.

This essay (written as per Thapar in 1907 in Bengali—the English version appeared in *Modern Review* in 1911) could be juxtaposed to an essay written by Tagore while defending his novel *Ghaire Baire.* A relevant extract from the essay might be interesting:

> Unfortunately, in Bengali, the criticism of literature has resolved itself into a judgement of the proprieties which are necessary for orthodoxy... how far Shakuntala is the perfect Hindu woman and Dushyanta the perfect Hindu King—these are the questions seriously discussed in the name of literary criticism... There are a crowd of heroines in Shakespeare's dramas ... [but] even the most fanatical Christian theologians desist from awarding marks, in order of merit, according to their degrees of Christianity... If one must indulge in this absurd mania for classification, even in literature, then at least it should follow the line of human nature as much as possible, instead of being arranged on the wooden shelves of what is Hindu, and what is not.[67]

Thapar has contextualised her analysis of the critical reception of *Shakuntala* in the "Orientalist reading of it and equally frequently, the internalizing of this reading by commentators of the last century or two".[68] Even Tagore it seems, is not proof against/unscathed of the "disjuncture" produced in cultural history in the colonial period. Thapar has said that Kalidasa's version of the narrative of *Shakuntala* is "no longer concerned with lineage based societies and class but carries the rhetoric of the political power of monarchical states".[69] Kalidasa subscribes to the legitimization of "power in a single family and the authority of upper caste society". He had produced the play for a limited, sophisticated courtly audience, reflecting "brahmanical high culture" and its social values, although he may occasionally appear to question some of these values in a very mild manner.

Tagore however, appreciated Kalidasa on absolutely contrary premises to Thapar's. One of his essays written in 1922 which treats the Shakuntala theme, is entitled 'The Religion of the Forest'. The essay purportedly engages with the "realization of the truth of existence",[70] dwelling on the oppositional relationship of the principle of dualism" and the "principle of unity". Kalidasa is a proponent of the principle of unity for Tagore: "In Kalidasa's drama, *Shakuntala*, the hermitage, which dominates the play, overshadowing the king's palace, has the same idea running through it—the recognition of the kinship of man with conscious and unconscious creation alike".[71] Whereas for Thapar, in the play "Kingship is approximate to deity and kings and gods intermingle", and asramas as that of Kanva are the future "nuclei and networks of brahmanical culture",[72] Tagore can feel the yearning of the poet's heart for the "simplicity of India's past age of spiritual striving." As he says: "Kalidasa in almost all his works represented the unbounded impetuousness of Kingly splendour on the one side and the serene strength of regulated desires on the other."[73]

Thapar has located Tagore in an intellectual mileu which had acquired 'Victorian' attitudes in ways more than one. Class awareness has led to assessments at variance with epic sensitivity: "Nature and culture were no longer juxtaposed for nature had receded and the mores of 'civilization' had become essential to assessing the actions of the play".[74] Tagore however, has glorified the forest, highlighting in the play, "the contrast of the pompous heartlessness of the king's court and the natural purity of the forest hermitage."[75] He describes the hunting scene thus:

> The cruelty of the chase appears like a menace symbolizing the spirit of the king's life clashing against the spirit of the forest retreat, which is *sharnyam sarva-bhutanam* (where all creatures find their protection of love). And the pleading of the forest-dwellers with the king to spare the life of the deer, helplessly innocent and beautiful, is the pleading that rises from the heart of the whole drama.[76]

The concept of the hermitage, and man's relationship with the forest had been elaborated in an earlier writing on this subject in Tagore's Bengali essay "Tapoban", rendered into English in May 1919.[77] 'The ideal hermitage of ancient India' as described in the essay "was not a theatre where the spirit should wrestle with the flesh, or where the monastic order should try conclusions with the social order.... the *tapovan* is *shantraspadam*... the emotional quality peculiar to the forest retreat is Peace, the peace which is the emotional counterpart of perfection."[78] The curse of Shakuntala is a metaphor for suffering, brought upon her by the turning of her back to the 'duty of the higher life' personified by the ascetic at the gate, and by her yielding readily to the other guest, the King, who was the embodiment of worldly passion. It mirrors the continuing insult offered by humans to the 'Eternal in Man'. Kalidasa had felt that his country also suffered from the same curse of the 'world being too much with it'. Tagore stated that the play was in fact a criticism of the conduct of the kings of that period, most of whom were, "deeply drawn into the eddy of self-indulgence ... fighting each other for power, the love of which leads men into the insanity of suicide."[79] Shakuntala remains a symbol of resilience and poise, qualities which enable her to survive the cruel ordeal which she is subjected to, personifying the 'divine beauty of the play', 'sublimely great' through her 'frailness'. The King's hunger of the hunt finds its parallel in the modern age in the "ugly greed of commercialism... its mailed fist of earth hunger," against which Kalidasa's voice is raised, ever relevant in the face of the contemporary onslaught on all things beautiful and delicate, by the 'ruthless machines' of the 'lords of Earth' celebrating their 'reckless carnival' of modern empire.

It is not Shakuntala, but the king who is the object of impeachment and ridicule, in the play, feels Tagore:

> The message of the poet is uttered by the two hermit boys, when they enter the King's palace, just before the impending catastrophe of Shakuntala's life, the naked cruelty of which is skillfully hidden by the episode of the curse, though it was unbarred a moment before through the shameless self-confession of fickleness by the King, when he listened to the lamentation of Hamsapadika, one of his numerous victims.[80]

I shall return to the 'subaltern perspectives' and the question of the 'ideal wife within a nationalism' that Thapar mentions in her discourse on Shakuntala, and present these very issues as enmeshed in Tagore's social awareness. For the present, I find Tagore's intellectual lineage and world view as belonging to the tradition of social engagement adopted by his father, the Maharishi, and Keshub Chandra Sen, who championed the cause of human rights as being realisable in their times, not in some distant age. Conservatives had found little sympathy for these two men, as explained B.N. Ganguli: "If they had not repudiated Hinduism, they would probably have found themselves within the fold as founders of particular sects. But, as social rebels, willingly or unwillingly, they were outside the pale of Hindu society and religion."[81]

In his analysis of Kalidasa's relationship with nature/court, Tagore views, within this structure, Western aesthetics particularly Shakespeare's record on this count. There is a 'secret vein of complaint against the artificial life of the King's court,' but nature represented for instance as the forest of Arden is 'didactic in its lessons'. The relationship of Prospero, Ariel and Caliban, seen as a metaphor of the colonizer–colonized relationship, has been an evocative issue in recent postcolonial theory. Tagore has an interesting remark to make in this context: "In the *Tempest*, through Prospero's treatment of Ariel and Caliban we realise man's struggle with nature and his longing to sever connection with her."[82]

It may be possible to see in this remark, seen specially in the background of the oft mentioned idea of the forest as a symbol of uncorrupted nature, and urbanity as an attribute of the all conquering mechanical West, the equations between mechanical power/language/imposed culture, and a hapless victim of power.

Said has spoken of 'reinscription' while 'decolonizing resistance', in which the "formerly silent native speaks and acts on territory reclaimed as part of a general movement of resistance, from the colonist".[83] Aime Cesaire, George Lamming and Retamar have seen Caliban and Ariel as colonial symbols, as receptacles of the molten lead of acculturation which seeks to mould them into insignias of everlasting enslavement. They have sought to 'explode

Prospero's old myth' by providing a language for the men who are still regarded as slaves. Caliban and not Ariel is the symbol of hybridity now, preferred over the latter, who was earlier seen as a bright and willing pupil of the civilized master.

Tagore, as earlier mentioned, had never subscribed to a common definition of civilization. Even in the choice of language, he preferred the vernacular as the mode of expression, and started writing or translating into English quite late in life. Many contemporary postcolonial points of debate are therefore not applicable to him. Diop had expressed the anguish of 'uprooted beings', who are afflicted by a crisis of identity in the mind, and in feeling, those who, even in the process of constituting a new race, [were] mentally crossed [mentalement métisse], ... had not acquired an awareness of their own originality and had not made that originality known."[84] The colonizers of Africa unfortunately sought to denude the land of its native system of education, religion and culture. The benefits of western science were confused with an alien transplanted ethos which became inimical to the development of a composite culture. But culture can never really be destroyed. If a healthy fusion is obstructed from flowering, the past of a country far from being extinguished takes on the shape of a violent assertion. Anguish turns to anger. Due to a fortuitous set of circumstances, the awareness of the past was a powerful component in the minds of Indian intellectuals in the last two centuries.

Tagore like some others of his generation cautioned: "The unfortunate people who have lost the harvest of their past have lost their present age. They have missed their seed for cultivation, and go begging for their bare livelihood."[85] Outlining his vision of an 'Ideal Eastern University' he had welcomed the dissemination of knowledge based on the combined thought of the East and the West. But he was anxious that the particular genius of a people should not be stunted by mindless imitation of the ways of an entirely different culture, born of an entirely different historical situation, although he had "no distrust of any culture because of its foreign character." Indeed he welcomed all such catalytic exchanges which represented to him the 'shock of extraneous forces', which had ever contributed to the development of civilizations by their youthful intellectual vigour. He acknowledged the beneficial aspects of European influence, the fertile presence of European culture, which "has come to us, not only with its knowledge, but with its velocity." Many European institutions continued to render yeoman service to their societies, because in his opinion they were rooted in their milieu and were being continuously renovated and replenished through the 'medium of living men', who indulge in intellectual activity in consonance with the personality of their lands—manifested in their acts of heroism, sacrifice, and in their search for truth, expressed through a language native to those lands. This vitalising activity was also facilitated by a kind of intellectual unity, flowing out of great centres of learning, which are like nuclei of living cells. He protested against the notion that such intellectual unity was impossible in India due to its multiplicity of languages. For him the plurality of languages was a cause of strength rather than weakness. In a remarkable statement, he compared this plurality with the fact that Europe also had many separate/distinct languages which had provided her with more vigour, and so concluded that, such an energy could also be created in India, which was not merely like one of the many countries of Europe, but was like Europe itself—the land of 'different peoples with many different languages'. India could revitalize herself in the realm of thought and expression not through a foreign language but in her own vernaculars, which had years ago helped her to manifest the 'idiosyncrasies' of her peoples even in the days when Sanskrit had been the predominant language, such as could never have been possible in a foreign tongue. English thus could not hope to become the vehicle of modern India's self discovery:

> In the United States, in Canada and other British colonies, the language of the people is English. It has a great literature which had its birth and growth in the history of the British Islands. But when this language, with all its products and acquisitions, matured by ages on its own mother soil, is carried into foreign

> lands, which have their own separate history and their own life growth, it must constantly hamper the indigenous growth of culture and destroy individuality of judgment and the perfect freedom of self expression. The inherited wealth of the English language, with all its splendour, becomes an impediment when taken into different surroundings... A language is not like an umbrella or an overcoat, that can be borrowed by unconscious or deliberate mistake; it is like the living skin itself.[86]

Tagore was an exponent of the rich bilingual tradition of the Indian Renaissance, when many Indians could explore the realm of ideas, and express that exploration with equal felicity in three languages, English, Sanskrit and a vernacular; in many cases the number of languages over which they had consummate mastery was more; and perhaps there was not one distinguished Indian who was not proficient in one Indian vernacular along with English. This was the reason why European thought models never did achieve predominance in Indian intellectual discourse, and consequently India did not witness the hothouse activity of violently denying Western association with acrid vehemence, that was witnessed in some African anticolonial movements. Sartre had described the situation in these colonies thus: "And since words derive from ideas, when the Negro declares in French that he rejects French culture, he takes in one hand that which he has pushed aside with the other. He brands himself with the thinking apparatus of the enemy as with an embossment."[87] However, his analysis is not relevant to the Indian condition. As discussed above, Tagore, Vivekananda, Gandhi and others of their tradition were aware of the need for vernacular expression, and the very fact that they occasionally used English to proclaim this awareness does not dilute the force of their conviction because during most of their time they were expressing precisely this concept and other equally significant ideas in Indian languages as well. English language brought to them its historical associations, but judging by their stand on matters of culture and identity, as in the case of Tagore, these thoughts were strained through experiential contemplation, and the assimilation of ideas was at an altogether different level, where there was practically no possibility of cultural subordination.

The Trenchant Tagore

The controversy over his views on Shakuntala may be cited as a typical misinterpretation of Tagore. What he said of his own time, is relevant more than ever amidst the din set up by clamouring ideologies, holding out the sentence of relegation to secondary status: "It is sad to see wisdom struggling to seem clever, a prophet arrayed in caps and bells before an admiring multitude"[88].

The tendency to see Tagore in soft, dulcet terms has persisted, almost doggedly. Many neglect to see that he had 'flint and iron in him, he had character.' One of his modern biographies succinctly points out the trenchant critic in him:

> Obviously the Nobel Committee of 1913 had not the foggiest notion that in far off Bengal Tagore was a polemical critic of religious, social and political orthodoxy, and by no means friendly to the government. If they had read his Bengali essays, they would not have given him the Nobel Prize.[89]

It is conjectured that in these days, Tagore the essayist would have been preferred over Tagore the poet for the Nobel, particularly ever since a friend of the Late Alfred Nobel revealed that Nobel was an anarchist in his views, and by mentioning 'idealist leaning' as a qualification for the award, he would have meant a critical attitude to Religion, Royalty, Marriage, and, Social order generally[90]. Dario Fo, honoured in the teeth of opposition from the Vatican is one such example of the prize being given to a writer expressing such an attitude.

It is this preoccupation with a 'softer/sweeter' Tagore that may explain the binary opposites which beset his reception in the West—a chorus of adoration of the unfathomable spirituality of his poetry, thereafter, shrill denunciation and neglect. This image tends to get reinforced by the scheme of translation which has yet to produce a comprehensive rendering of the body of his socio-economic writings into English:

> To those who do not read Bengali, Tagore is exclusively a literary person or a mystic of sorts. The fact that some two-thirds of his writings are serious essays, mostly on socio-economic problems of India and the crisis of civilization has been more or less ignored in Tagore scholarship.[91]

Moreover, his personality like the times he lived in, does not yield to easy categorization. The University of Oxford used the phrase 'myriad mindedness', in its citation while honouring him with a degree in 1940. His myriad mindedness—reflected in the variety of his writings/interviews/correspondence—forms the underpinning of his work, and is an essential consideration for analysis.

Tagore, in his Preface to *Sadhana,* had introduced himself as an amalgam of different strands, placing his social commitment at par with his metaphysical quest:

> The writer has been brought up in a family where texts of the Upanishads are used in daily worship; and he has had before him the example of his father, who lived his long life in the closest communion with God, while not neglecting his duties to the world, or allowing his keen interest in all human affairs to suffer any abatement.[92]

It is an oblique reference to the way of his own life—the artist blending with the Zamindar at Shelidah. Earlier, I have mentioned in passing Tagore's varied interests in issues relating to women and the socially unprivileged groups, which nowadays have been termed 'subalterns'—the term itself implying membership of a hierarchy as opposed to an outcaste, and a willingness on the part of the class to subject itself to obedience to its superior class, which has an equally strong notion of subjecting the submissive class to its will. Tagore, while acknowledging exploitation and criticizing it, did not accept the concept of watertight identities.

Tagore visualized human relations in a fluid state, where class/category did not always obtrude upon individual emotions. His ideas were very subtle and strong indictments spring up in unexpected places. Hardly the mild aesthete, many of his artistic experiments were iconoclastic, especially in his paintings. The well known sculptor, Shankho Chaudhuri mentions Tagore's preference for art models: "a beautiful face or a beautiful figure had no special appeal to him. To him they were too sweet. Ugliness to him had a strange force and attraction."[93]

The plight of women and children; the travails of the people of Africa; the cause of striking jute mill workers; the cause of the social outcastes; these and many other social issues find voice in his writings (especially his prose) along with metaphysical subjects.

The frustrated lives of women caught in claustrophobic households occupy a substantial portion of his fiction. In fact this group of stories/novels can be categorized as problem stories/novels. *Nashta Nid, Chokher Bali, Nauka Dubi, Shesher Kabita, Yoga Yog,* and *Gora* have prominent women protagonists and the author has presented their emotional dilemma with empathy and clarity. But, as always with Tagore, he does not allow a 'point of view' to take the place of narrative. The message is subtly woven in the narrative. In his socio-economic writings, there is conspicuous evidence of an active engagement with the concerns of the day. He had written a letter of support for V.J. Patel's Bill for Hindu Inter-Caste Marriage in 1918:

> It is humiliating to find that some of our countrymen are opposing this Bill under the notion that it will injure Hindu society if it is passed. Those who feel no compunction in invoking the organized power of the state to compel or help by its connivance a weak minority to submit to the worst form of social slavery, can certainly not be held as fit to claim a large share of such power.[94]

He had brought a Japanese Jiu-Jitsu expert, Professor Takagaki, to Shantiniketan to give a through training in the art of self-defence, and physical instruction, not only to the boys but to the girls of his school, and he even wrote to the Mayor of Kolkata to arrange a similar training for the boys and girls of Kolkata, and was prepared to bear all financial expense. Tagore hardly favoured the image of demure/frail womanhood for the girls of India. His modernist approach to India's problems is reflected in a letter he wrote to Margaret Sanger, the editor of *Birth Control Review* in 1926. When Sanger visited India ten years later and met both Gandhi and Tagore—men who had opposite views on birth control—the newspapers reported that Tagore had 'promised his moral support'. The writer of the letter comes across as a practical man with no illusions—certainly not the type he is projected as having been:

> I am of opinion that the Birth Control movement is a great movement not only because it will save women from enforced and undesirable maternity, but because it will help the cause of peace.... I believe, that to wait till the moral sense of man becomes a great deal more powerful than it is now and till then to allow countless generations of children to suffer privations and untimely death for no fault of their own is a great social injustice which should not be tolerated. I feel grateful for the cause you have made your own and for which you have suffered.[95]

Misinterpretation, inadvertent or deliberate, of Tagore, is not a novel phenomena. In 1927, the notorious Katherine Mayo, author of *Mother India* distorted Tagore's contribution to Keyserling's *Book of Marriage*, as a support for her slanderous portrayal of Indian social practices. Tagore challenged her to prove her libel against him. Mayo's misrepresentations, were, like this passage which she falsely claimed to have quoted from Tagore: that, "[child marriage is] a flower of the sublimated spirit, a conquest over sexuality and materialism won by exalted intellect for the eugenic uplift of the race"; or that, "Indian women must be securely bound and delivered before their womanhood is upon them if they are to be kept in hand". Tagore's letter of protest to the *Manchester Guardian* in October 1927, is hard hitting and implicitly questions western attitudes towards the East.[96]

The theme of social deprivation/degradation forms a recurrent motif in the essays of Tagore, as in the plays *Achalayatan* and *Chandalika*. They exhibit the typical ambience of Tagore's plays—the young caught in the vortex of social complexities, an orthodox protagonist as defender of existing social practices; and a Thakurdada (Grandfather) Baul (itinerant Singer) or a Sannyasi, opposing, and helping to dissolve the irksome social barriers through the quiet strength of their personalities, and their home grown wisdom. Recent critics, favouring clear cut antagonistic positions on socio-economic issues, have taken little notice of the revolutionary content of these plays. But in his inimitable style Tagore has put forward an unambiguous defence of iconoclasm, favouring the sweeping away of the cobwebs of mindless social norms and harmful practices hitherto claiming the sanction of a hallowed tradition. This social consciousness has on occasion been deemed, by some critics, to have been so powerful as to even affect the artistic creativity of these two plays. A veteran Tagore scholar has commented:

> No one would object to a 'message' in a work of art so long as it is worked out in a creative, that is, in an artistic manner. In *Achalayatan* however, the didactic element is so loud and insistent that it affects the workmanship; the social awareness, so real in the context of the times, is so powerful that it obtrudes on the unity of design of the play. To a certain extent this would be true of one of his last plays, a purely musical one, *Chandalika* (The Untouchable Girl, 1933), where, too, his main theme is the curse of untouchability.[97]

So much for Tagore's 'mild, mystical' image!

Tagore's critique of western civilization/English colonialism in *The Crisis of Civilization*, is striking in ways more then one: it throbs with the anguish of a man who is on the verge of 'quitting' his life, an anguish caused not because of his impending demise, but at the debris of modern civilization he sees lying scattered around him; it is an uncompromising indictment which rends the robes of superiority donned by an arrogant nation, exposing the pathetic hollowness of its claims. It is, in his own words: "the tragic tale of the gradual loss of my faith in the claims of the European nations to civilization".[98] He admits that like many other Indians he was initially impressed by the "mighty literature" of the English, inculcated in a system of education where the "spirit of scientific enquiry was not much in evidence." But he also perceives in the admiration of the Indians for the traditions of British parliamentary democracy with its brilliant thinkers and orators, an evidence, not only of the greatness of the English achievement, but of the innate large heartedness of his countrymen whose emotions were stirred by nobility wherever it manifested itself. The critique revolves around the "mechanical" and the "organic", which was Tagore's basis for the evaluation of civilization models. A civilization howsoever great in its material achievements, ultimately negates its greatness through an indifference to the fate of millions of people, whom it regards as mere objects of exploitation, precisely because a mechanical concept of the universe lies at the core of its vision, which limits its growth and maturity, and it fails to perceive the point where growth is no longer growth, but a process of accumulation. Accretions from the scrap yard of history are perceived by it to be value additions to its collective personality, and it shies away from inconvenient truth which they had identified with in its period of growth: "I began to discover how easily those who accepted the highest truths of civilization disowned them with impunity whenever questions of national self-interest were involved."[99] He wonders how the English can rouse themselves to fight for democracy in a fellow European country like Spain, but remain insensitive to the plight of the Chinese, an attitude smacking of racism and historical schizophrenia. Locating the conflict raging in his times in the 'spirit of violence' which lies otherwise dormant in the psychology of the West, he pays fulsome tribute to the greatness and selflessness of a C.F. Andrews, a specimen of the noblest qualities of the English race. The hope that the saviour of the human race, transparently Christ like, is awaiting his birth in a poor hovel of India, balances the note of pessimism pervading the critique.

The relationship with Andrews acquires greater significance for Tagore, in helping him retain his initial feeling of respect for the English race, 'inspired by their literature', which decades of experience of colonial subjection under British rule had almost made him 'lose completely'. Some twenty years ago Tagore had spoken of guarding the mind against the 'encroaching distrust of the individuals of a nation'. He had been saddened by the thirst for possession and power, which was becoming the primary characteristic of Western civilization. He had thought the lasting achievements of the West to be otherwise: "I have no doubt in my mind that the West owes its true greatness, not so much to its marvelous training of intellect, as to its spirit of service devoted to the welfare of man."[100] That spirit of service was being disgraced by the 'forcible parasitism', that Europe was 'practicising upon the two large continents of the world', causing a gradual 'atrophy and degeneration' to its moral nature. In his opinion this degeneration was prominently displayed in a book written by Grogan and Sharp, *From the Cape to Cairo*, a book pervaded by the 'logic of egoism'. Tagore accuses the writers of having a bland cynicism towards the African people, for implying that 'moral sentiments have no serious effect in the history of human beings'. Their avowed intention was to 'steal his (African) limbs' after having 'stolen his land'. He meticulously tears apart the camouflage of semantics that hides the real intention of the average European with regard to Africa. Although terms like 'compulsory labour' are bandied about instead of 'slavery', in the book the eternal shame of colonial endeavour cannot be hidden behind the facade of the 'white man's burden' any longer:

> ... the only important question for the white men of South Africa is, how indefinitely to grow fat on ostrich feathers and diamond mines, and dance jazz dances over the misery and degradation of a whole race of fellow-beings of a different colour from their own. Possibly they believe that moral laws have a special domesticated breed of comfortable concessions for the service of the people in power.[101]

In spite of being solidly posited against racial aggression, social orthodoxy, religious obscurantism, and gender and caste injustice, a proper understanding of Tagore continues to elude most scholars of postcolonialism, who engage with themes of hegemony and domination. Perhaps it is vital to understand the aesthetic vision of Tagore, which served as the underpinning of even his socio-economic ideas, in order to see his concepts in their fullness. As Naravane has observed:

> The main feature of Tagore's philosophy, which has a direct bearing upon his aesthetics, is the positive and integrative spirit in which he views all aspects of life, reality, thought and knowledge.... He looks upon life as an indivisible, ever flowing river which cannot be studied in portions by putting intellectual dams upon it. Indeed, the river becomes for him a beautiful, poetic symbol of all-inclusiveness and relatedness.[102]

Recalling Keyserling's description of Tagore as "The greatest reconciler of the modern age", Naravane uses the term 'madhyama marg' for Tagore's philosophy. Madhyama marg implies the existence of apparently opposite principles, "a positive affirmative acceptance of whatever is valuable in each perspective, not just a negation or rejection of what is irrational or outmoded."[103] Naravane has quoted from Tagore's beautiful poem *Samanjasya* to exemplify Tagore's philosophy of harmony. Here are some lines from an English rendering of this poem by Naravane under the title of "Accord" or "Equilibrium":

> The Infinite wants the finite's intimate comradeship,
> And the finite wishes to lose itself in the infinite.
> In creation and dissolution, through some mysterious contrivance,
> There is continuous coming-and-going between
> Feeling and Form.
> Bondage wanders in search of its freedom;
> Freedom seeks a dwelling-place within Bondage.[104]

Tagore's distrust of extremism flowed from this belief in the union of opposites. He abhorred all displays of fanaticism and his letters condemn, all violent, anti-thetical intellectual positions, and physical acts of such tenor accruing from such thought.

Tagore & Einstein: Different Worldviews

Tagore closely followed the major trends of science and apart from his long association with the redoubtable J.C. Bose, had many an occasion to interact with scientists. His meetings with Einstein, particularly that in 1930, is the object of much speculation and draws attention to the profundity of the discussion between the two men. An account of Einstein's discussions with Tagore during that meeting concerning the reality and the relationship of determinism to free will, appeared in the *New York Times*, wetted by Einstein, and is also mentioned in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in its biographical note on Einstein, and also in some of his major biographies. Brian Josephson, a Nobel Laureate in physics at Cambridge University, commented: "Tagore is I think, saying that truth is a subtler concept than Einstein realises". A brief extract as in Home and Robinson is presented:

> E: There are two different conceptions about the nature of the universe—the world as a unity dependent on humanity, and the world as reality independent of the human factor...
> T: This world is a human world—the scientific view of it is also that of the scientific man. Therefore, the world apart from us does not exist; it is a relative world, depending for its reality upon our consciousness.
> ...[Einstein asserted]
> 'I cannot prove, but I believe in the Pythagorean argument, that the truth is independent of human beings', and Tagore countered with a reference to ancient Indian philosophy, to 'Brahman, the absolute truth, which cannot be conceived by the isolation of the individual mind or described in words, but can be realized only by merging the individual in its infinity, Einstein became more concrete:

E: The mind acknowledges realities outside of it, independent of it.
.... T: In any case, if there be any truth absolutely unrelated to humanity, then for us it is absolutely non-existing.[105]

This conversation highlights Tagore's unflinching adherence to an absolute consciousness comprehensible through man alone. It can be correlated to many contemporary developments in science, notably physics.[106] The difference in the approach of the two men flowed from their concept of man and his relationship to the universal consciousness/truth. There is a strong possibility of Einstein's being influenced by the Judeo-Christian concept of divinity, where man in spite of his centrality is strictly subservient to the order of things. It may be his lot to rationalize the workings of the universe, but the universe moves on well-oiled hinges designed by the creator. For all his endeavours, it is only the physical world he can and perhaps should understand, and if possible exploit it to the fullest to provide a decent living to his species, otherwise, the 'moving finger writes and having writ moves on'. Einstein had started the dialogue with the question. "Do you believe in the Divine as isolated from the world?", to which Tagore had answered: " Not isolated. The infinite personality of man comprehends the universe." Throughout the dialogue the two men seek answers on the basis of apparently anti-thetical positions which Einstein states at the outset: 'The world as a unity dependent on humanity', as opposed to 'The world as a reality independent of the human factor.' Einstein holding on to the latter position, conceded that although he could not prove that truth was 'valid independent of humanity', he still believed it 'firmly'. He contended, "I believe that whatever we do or live for has its causality". However Tagore did not deviate from his concept of the human consciousness, of course with its different levels. He stated: "Truth, which is one with the universal being, must essentially be human ... at least the truth which is described as scientific and can only be reached through the process of logic, in other words, by an organ of thought which is human."[107]

Much before his dialogue with Einstein took place, Tagore had spelled out many of the concepts that later formed the basis of his position in the dialogue. As I mentioned earlier in the context of his view of history in comparison to Tolstoy, Tagore rebelled against the tyranny of 'facts' and 'causality' around which Einstein's concept of modern science was based. At the heart of the difference lay Tagore's concept of man as the perceiver, standing both within and without the flow of events:

> The principle of unity is the mystery of all mysteries. The existence of a duality at once raises a question in our minds, and we seek its solution in the one.... And then we give utterance to this most startling of all paradoxes, that the one appears as many, that the appearance is the opposite of truth and yet is inseparably related to it.[108]

Einstein had definitively said during the conversation: "Even the elements are not without statistical order, now and ever onward, just as they have done all along".[109] For Tagore that certitude was irrelevant. He could not understand the desire on the part of most men to be satisfied in discovering the, "uniformity of law among the diversity of nature," losing in the process the "feeling of mystery, which is at the root of all our delights". The genius of Einstein had channeled itself into science for the sake of science. With all his humanity and compassion, so apparent in his socio-economic writings, his primary concern was with the impersonal world of knowledge: where the atom ruled the world. As it happened with Einstein, in a highly contentious world situation, a vision without the centrality of concrete humanism could occasionally cause momentous decisions to be taken, without fully understanding the human cost. To his never ending agony, Einstein did, in the face of a power he believed to be evil, endorse and advocate the research for the atom bomb. Tagore's deep seated humanism, made him uneasy with any generalization which ignored the experiential component of human beings. He had once made the prophetic remark: "The world of science is not a world of reality, it is an abstract world of force. We can use it by the help of our intellect but cannot realize it by the help of our personality."[110]

Einstein condemned the modern nation state with its antagonistic orientation and destructive potential, defining nationalism as 'the measles of mankind', an infantile disease, but he never negated that concept of science which had generated the vision of the industrial national state, which had begotten a technological force, and which was even in his lifetime acquiring a huge profile—aligning itself with the atavistic passions of man to form the modern military industrial complex. He condemned the manifestation of the idea, not the basic concept. May be he was engrossed in the minutae of science, the joy of discovering ever new areas, which however may not have had ring of personal experience/emotion. Tagore rebelled against the marshalling of the forces of science towards denying the existence of the soul of the universe: "Every where in man's world the Supreme Person is suffering from the killing of the human reality by the imposition of the abstract."[111] Already he could sense forces being set in motion that would see the dwarfing of small villages by huge dams; destruction of a delicate ecological balance by mindless expropriation of natural reserves—which far from fulfilling the basic necessities of a sick and starving planet, would swell the coffers of the few, sparking of endless wars. A situation was being created which made a certain set of ideas occupy centrestage as being the only ideas backed by facts and evidence. The cognitive process seemed to move on a single plane, and no questions were being raised against that process of monopolizing. Tagore warned against this trend:

> But law in itself is a limit. It only shows that whatever is can never be otherwise. When man is exclusively occupied with the search for the links of causality, his mind succumbs to the tyranny of law in escaping from the tyranny of facts.[112]

It was this all conquering facet of science that Tagore criticized when he stated that, "science is at the beginning of the invasion of the material world and there goes on a furious scramble for plunder." But it can not be said that he was against a scientific temper in the field of human ideas. In fact it was the scientific temper of his mind that questioned the angular path that institutionalized science was taking, in express contradiction to its own spirit. This is borne out in the appreciation of his acumen by some great scientists. He had even said that it was with the progress in science that: "the wholeness of the world and our oneness with it is becoming clear to our mind."[113] His mystical spirit, celebrating the variety of the universe, stands in sharp contrast to Einstein's concept of impersonal truth, which Tagore hinted was possible to grasp, but on a plain which was altogether different from the plain that Einstein envisaged. The physics of the middle dimension, and philosophers of science like Kuhn have since questioned the objectivity of science.[114]

In his scientific consciousness, Tagore stood firmly outside the paradigm of contemporary science, apparent all the more in his rejection of modern Eurocentrism, in the field of idea, its adjunct, and its complete industrialization of society. Einstein's overriding desire was to discover the common law governing the behaviour of every thing in the universe, 'from electron to the planets', relating them in a single formula-unified field theory. Even his followers within the science fraternity rejected the plausibility of such a theory, as they felt that the developments in the quantum theory had uncovered an uncertainty principle in measurements of the motion of particles.[115]

Interestingly, a couple of years later, Freud agreed with Einstein's suggestion, which formed the contents of a letter to him, that mankind must have an innate lust for hatred and destruction, and so war was natural to man and responded that pacifism as found in people of Einstein's ilk was merely the outcome of their cultural refinement. Tagore would have regarded this as folly.

This belief of Tagore in 'Man', forms the core of his views on industrialization. It also raised questions relating to the material/spiritual aspect of life; and it would also make it impossible for him to take extreme positions. The question of means and ends were very important for him as they were to Gandhi.

Tagore's Distrust of Extremism

Tagore's uneasiness with extremism whether in vision or policy, was intrinsic to his view of life. Many of his plays dramatise the woeful effect of angular assertion, by violence done to self and sensibility, to society at large and within the confines of one's hearth and personal relationships.

Prakritir Protishodh (Nature's Revenge), rendered into English as *Sannyasi or The Ascetic* by Tagore, deals, in his own words, with "the joy of attaining the infinite within the finite". The Sannyasi clings to the notion of extreme renunciation of worldly ties under the spell of an unreal and half baked concept born of a sterile exercise of the intellect, as most extremist cults are. He rejects the pristine affection of the little untouchable girl, thinking it to be a mere illusion, under the arrogance of a certitude, that the "world is death spread out to eternity. It dies every moment". His journey through life, a metaphor for experience, after much sorrow and a humbling desolation after the lonely little castaway has gone away for ever, brings him to the realization that: "The finite is the true infinite, and love knows its truth."

Raktakarabi (Red Oleanders) and *Muktadhara* (The Waterfall) besides dwelling on the same theme of realizing infinitude in finitude, also offers an effective expose of the twin dangers of ill-advised industrialization aligned to chauvinistic nationalism. *Sacrifice* or *Bisarjan* (1917) offers by far the strongest denunciation of an immoderate, blind belief in a mirage which holds people under its spell, causing great misery, and exposed ultimately, but only after taking its toll. The play's dedication: 'to those heroes who bravely, stood for peace when human sacrifice was acclaimed for during the war'; itself is an eloquent pointer to its message. The farsighted king, Govindamanikya, turning away from the bloody cult of animal sacrifice, pleads with the image of the Goddess:

> Mother do not raise your sword and lick your lips for blood; do not set brother against brother, and woman against man. If it is your desire to strike me by the hand of one I love, then let it be

> fulfilled. For the sin has to ripen to its ugliest limits, before it can burst and die a hideous death.[116]

Earlier he has resignedly acknowledged the inexorable law that, "man loses his humanity when it concerns his gods".

The command of the Goddess, interpreted, as per tradition, by Raghupati the priest, is however cause for much strain in the play. Govinda proclaims the "right of the king and the peasant alike to maintain truth and righteousness." In the end it is only the sacrifice of the life of Jaisingh that jolts Raghupati out of his delusion. Sanity is restored to him, but not before the supreme sacrifice is claimed by the madness of ideology/faith. He throws away the image in a symbolic act of liberation after lamenting the death of his beloved Jaisingh, and perhaps of the false ideals that he himself had once perceived in the stone image; falsely mistaken for the deity herself? His lament is polemical: "Look how she stands there, the silly stone—deaf, dumb, blind—the whole sorrowing world weeping at her door,—the noblest hearts wrecking themselves at her stony feet." Earlier in the play, the excesses of organized religion are castigated by Jaisingh:

> We enshrine false hood in our temple, with all devotion; yet she is never there.... But is there any need of God in this little world of ours? Let us be fearlessly godless and come closer to each other.... For in their heaven there are no men, no creatures, who can suffer.[117]

Similarly, misguided nationalism vitiates human relationship, and claims its victim, who is the voice of love, and a symbol of individual freedom in *Char Adhyaya.* This novel, written towards the close of Tagore's life, was a protest against Sarat Chandra Chatterji's provocative novel on the subject of revolutionary terrorism, *Pather Dabi* written in 1926. Although even *Pather Dabi* offers a critique of violence through the heroine Bharati, the novel is frankly eulogistic of the cult of violence; and it is only later, that Tagore's Ela in *Char Adhyay,* concretises the total rejection of the idea that violence is a legitimate means of protest, and ultimately pays with her own life when Atin who loves her, is asked by his superiors in the revolutionary movement to eliminate her, which he does. Tagore's fearless espousal of his convictions brought him tremendous unpopularity, but as usual he remained unfazed. He had since long regarded courage of conviction as a primary human attribute, and despised the tendency to cower in the face of savage reaction, either from the government or from the public. This sentiment was in evidence in his response to Sarat Chandra when he sought Tagore's views on the merits of *Pather Dabi*, which had been banned by the government by then. No stranger to the ire of the establishment and the public alike, which was frequently directed at his own writings, Tagore wrote to Sarat Chandra:

> The book is certainly inflammatory.... This is not necessarily a black mark against its author, because if a writer feels British rule to be reprehensible, he cannot remain silent. But he must accept that there are penalties for not remaining silent.... a writer like you who uses the story form, has a much wider impact, unlimited in space and time.... In deciding to confront authority, one must be ready for the counter attack—for therein lies the challenge. To lament the severity of the blow will only impair the value of one's action.[118]

Tagore's abhorrence of one such offshoot of extremism—Fascism, finds expression in his reply to Rash Behari Bose, an Indian revolutionary settled in Japan, when Bose asked for his support against the voice of protestation raised at Japanese atrocities in China. Tagore complained of Japan's betrayal of the hope that it would represent Asia's challenge to Western imperialism, and was bitter at its becoming a "worse menace to the defenseless peoples of the East". In his eyes, before science had provided powerful teeth to savagery, annexation by strong nations had been a fact of history which only seemed half cruel: older powers became dilapidated with time and in turn yielded their place to new ones. But technological prowess had caused a big difference:

> All that is changed, and today when one nation invades another, its wrong is not only that of mere imperialist ambition, but of human butchery more indiscriminate than any plague. And if the outraged conscience all over the world cries out against such a wrong, who am I to recall such righteous protest.[119]

Tagore had been horrified at the Nazi advance in Europe. His letter to Leonard Elmhirst in June 1940, mirrors his disgust at Allied surrender to the Nazi war machine. He attributed current British emasculation to its recent colonial adventures, which had taken its toll on the English race. However he remained hopeful that England's inherent strength of character, borne out by its history, would ultimately enable it to resist fascist aggression. Likewise, he appealed to President Roosevelt for America's intervention in the European war for the cause of democracy. His telegram of 15 June 1940 was given to Reuters and was widely published. *The Times*, London, published it after omitting the sentence in which he had deplored the, 'feebleness of our voice in India so utterly inadequate' in the face of the international crisis, drawing attention to the situation within and English colony. The strongest feeling of revulsion was however apparent in Tagore's letter to the Czech Indologist, Vincenc Lesny, written in October, 1938, at Chamberlain's acquiescence at the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia by Hitler's Germany. Recording his solidarity with the suffering people of that country, he felt constrained to express his horror at English vacillation:

> For what has happened in your country is not a mere local misfortune which may at best claim our sympathy, it is a tragic revelation that the destiny of all those principles of humanity for which the peoples of the West turned martyrs for three centuries rests in the hands of cowardly guardians who are selling it to save their own skins. It turns one cynical to see the democratic peoples betraying their kind when even the bullies stand by each other. I feel so humiliated and so helpless when I contemplate all this....

> Our country is itself a victim of these wrongs.... I can only remind those who are not yet wholly demented that when men turn beasts they sooner or later tear each other.[120]

Tagore's distrust of extremism, besides enveloping his sociopolitical ideas, spilled over to his aesthetic sensibility as well. His emphasis on controlled expression was legendary. His profoundest thoughts are reflected in carefully worded expositions. His letter to his son-in-law Narendranath Gangulee cautions against excitable writing besides being a comment on a dominant trend in contemporary prose:

> One never comes across such melodramatic elements in literary writing by superior authors. Balance and restraint are the hallmarks of the finest literary expression. The explicit and violent expression of strong emotion is inappropriate.... They are only found in advertisements—where writers need to shout—but in literature they are completely out of place.... The results of this are usually adverse: when style is overemphasized, emotional impact is actually diminished[121].

Tagore: Values Higher than Patriotism

This restraint is visible in his stand in the debates on nationalism, perhaps more than anywhere else. On 1918 as he planned to leave for a lecture tour in the USA, faced with the imminent death of his daughter Bela, he learnt that he had been accused—in the American press—of having supported extremist attempts to incite violence in India, during his American tour of 1916-1917, when in fact he had strongly condemned chauvinistic nationalism and attracted strong criticism for doing so. He cancelled his proposed visit to America and in scathing letters among others—to President Woodrow Wilson, denied all such charges—further reiterating his stand on the explosive issue of nationalism, especially significant in the context of the ongoing war:

> It is needless to tell you that I do not believe in patriotism which can ride rough shod over higher ideals of humanity, and I consider it to be an act of impiety against our own country when any service is offered to her which is loaded with secret lies and dishonest deeds of violence. I have been outspoken enough in my utterances when my country needed them, and I have taken upon myself the risk of telling unwelcome truths to my own countrymen as well as to the rulers of my country.[122]

Many such unwelcome truths were uttered by him to his countrymen over the course of years; many a time even to Gandhi, expressing his reservations about some of the policies of the Mahatma, who to his credit always responded with the greatest of grace and sincerity. In fact Gandhi's celebrated statement of letting the "cultures of all the lands" blow about his house, was prefixed with a sentence hardly ever quoted: "I hope I am as great a believer in free air as the great Poet"[123]. This was in response to Tagore's remonstrance during the Non-cooperation movement and its degeneration into social boycott at certain places which recured without Gandhi's consent and of which he had had no apprehension before: "We have no word for "Nation" in our language. When we borrow this word from other people, it never fits us."[124]

Earlier, *Ghaire Baire* was written mainly as a critique of the Swadeshi movement, against what Tagore perceived to be its negative character—manifested in its social coercion—enmeshing themes of aggressive mobilization and communal confrontation. For Tagore, it was tantamount to a defeat for the national cause if the movement for liberation ignored the sacrosanct rights of the individual to choose his/her own way. In those charged times the novel and its author became extremely unpopular. It is worth mentioning how a prominent scholar of the subaltern school has appreciated his courage of conviction:

> That head wound (of Nikhilesh) was a metaphor for the author's own battered reputation of 1908. For the fate of Nikhilesh reflected his own predicament of the Swadeshi days, when like

his noble but thoroughly misunderstood hero, he too had courted unpopularity by refusing to conform.[125]

While defending the novel in the *Modern Review*, in response to an overtly critical lady correspondent, Tagore criticized the tendency of the modern Bengalis for the vain assumption that India was a unique land with nothing common with the rest of the world. Tagore wrote:

> But India is not a creation of the Bengalis, and it had already existed before we began our literary criticism.... My last request to my correspondent is this, that she should take me seriously when I say that I love my country. If I did not, then it would have been quite easy for me to become popular with my countrymen.[126]

Tagore's skepticism towards militant displays of national fervour was part of, and because of, his concept/vision of India. His vision for his country could perhaps be construed as *civitas dei*-the city of God as the city of man, a community where love and relationship bind people together. Horrified by the atrocities of the first world war, and out of admiration for Woodrow Wilson's efforts for establishing a powerful League of Nations to prevent conflict, Tagore wanted to dedicate his lectures titled *Nationalism* to the American president. But he was not allowed to do so.[127]

His vision of the *civitas dei* found expression in two ways: A ceaseless vigilance against the aberrations/excesses (as he saw them) of the Indian national movement; and a formulation of the duties of an Indian nation and its destiny in the comity of nations. He steadfastly believed till the end of his life that the test of a civilization lay not in the "amount of power it has developed", but in the magnitude of its expression, through "its laws and institutions, the love of humanity."[128] Alerted and perturbed by the jingoistic assertions of a section of his countrymen during the first major Gandhian movement he went on record in a letter:

> The spirit of rejection finds its support in the consciousness of separation, the spirit of acceptance in the consciousness of unity. India has even declared that unity is Truth, and separateness is *maya*'. Our present struggle to alienate our heart and mind from those of the West is an attempt at spiritual suicide.[129]

Not many of his countrymen were happy with his stand and many have recorded their impressions. Subhas Bose, the Poet's compatriot from Bengal, found the Poet misinformed.[130]

Tagore's vision of the ideal nation was engendered in him through his exposure to the ancient Indian religious texts—primarily the epics and the *Upanishads.* It was due to this reason that he maintained an ideal concept of history till the very end of his life. In the early stages of his writing we encounter such sentiments as:

> Fortunate countries find the everlasting image of their land in their own history. It is history that serves as the introduction to one's own country during one's childhood. In our case it is just the opposite thing that happens: it is the history of our land that has kept our land obscured to us. From the invasion of Mahmud to the arrogant imperious declaration of Lord Curzon, all the historical annals till yesterday, are only a mass of strange mist for Bharatvarsha.[131]

But as the years passed by his perception of the medieval period of Indian history underwent a transformation. Speaking on 'What is Art', in 1920, of how in an ideal city public buildings express the love felt for the city by their citizens, he mentions, as an example, how the Mughal capitals manifest a human personality in their buildings,—"Mughal emperors were men, they were not administrators. They lived and died in India, they loved and fought. The memorials of their reigns do not persist in the ruins of factories and offices, but in immortal works of art...."[132]

In his *civitas dei* the past indignities of social segregation would have to be eradicated, and assuaged. His ideal nation had not existed in a concrete form in the past, the 'best and greatest of her sons' had through sublime messages exhorted their brethren towards an ideal state, which was to be the 'highest mission of our history', but their words have had no great effect. Even in the past, India had only "played with their words", and society through generations had gone on perpetuating caste divisions, blissfully oblivious of its evil consequences. The impetus of the "alien world" has disturbed the contrived heterogeneity of India, and an internal clash has ensued, and more sorrow and humiliation will be the lot of the nation if its real destiny is obscured by selfishness and insensitivity. Tagore's vision of India's grand achievement, is that of an unity within itself, of Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist and Christian, "not by force, not by the apathy of resignation, but in the harmony of active cooperation."[133] He envisaged that the India of his dreams will eradicate socio-economic inequalities, where man will accept the principle of cooperative endeavour not only on social issues, but also in economic matters, which he has hitherto obdurately refused to do. Mere "fulmination" against the prevailing capital-labour equation obfuscated the prevalence of such a state of affairs in almost every sphere of commercial activity. The lawyer exploited the hapless client by charging an exorbitant fee for a courtroom argument not extending beyond a few minutes, the factory owner fleeced the consumer, and the bridegroom demanded a huge dowry as the social system required a girl to get married but no such onus was put on a boy—all of this would have to change. Tagore is severely critical of "the extreme differences between the powers of the state and the powers of the people", which have made the people niggardly and timid. Constructive change can only be brought about, by "realizing our strength through methods of co-operation, by improving our own health and education."[134]

Tagore was distrustful of the western concept of the modern nation as he felt that such a concept relied on a mobilization of aggressive sentiments and ignored the real issues regarding public welfare. In an interview on the Palestinian problem, given to the *Jewish Standard*, he cautioned the Jews that the solution to their problem did not lie in political negotiations between the British government and the Zionist leaders held in London, but in a wider Arab-Jewish understanding. He warned of the possibility of "ugly eruptions in the Holy Land", if the Jews insisted on distinct Jewish economic and political interests in Palestine. He counselled them to eschew the "Western conception of prestige and pride", and strive for a homeland common to both Arabs and Jews where each group will retain its cultural and spiritual heritage. He evocatively appealed to them: "What we poets have dreamt the Jews can create in Palestine if they free themselves of the Western concept of nationalism".[135]

It may sound inexplicable to many that a man who could be so critical of Western colonial endeavour, and of European hegemony in matters of thought and knowledge, could be at the same time so opposed to conventional nationalism, which many would otherwise regard as a valid means of rectifying imbalances created by colonial arrogance, and also as a culmination of the anti-colonial, anti-imperialist freedom struggle in Latin America, Asia and Africa. But for Tagore, the modern concept of nationalism remained a legacy of Eurocentric mores, and rampant industrialization. It would be a manifestation of intellectual slavery, and result in a pale imitation of the Western model with its inequalities.

He had little faith, like Tolstoy in mere 'political reform'.[136] And 'nationalism' was an overwhelmingly political concept to him, a concept which satisfied the ego of a community and stoked the embers of retrograde passion. The state had become redundant for him, and a 'nation' would keep alive the state, with its destructive potential undiminished.

In *Ghaire–Baire,* Nikhilesh refuses to worship his country as a God, which he feels would only serve to bring a curse upon it. His refusal to deify his country, is in his eyes, proof of the genuine love he bears for his own country. Brecht had seen in the novel, a 'strong and gentle warning' of the corruptibility of nationalism.[137]

Said on Tagore

Throughout his life, Tagore—the poet at heart—tried to reconcile the meditative and the activist aspects of his life. The postcolonial critique of his philosophy would be better served were it to be mindful of this fact. Said has offered fulsome tribute to "his great lectures called Nationalism"[138], and hailed Tagore's effort to provide a creative solution to the "divisiveness produced by racial consciousness"—an evidence that "at its best nationalist resistance to imperialism was always critical of itself".[139]

Summing Up

Tagore's writings constitute great literature and have a deeply experiential content. They are not arid theorization of seemingly profound concepts, but an exploration of living ideas: a journey of the soul, throbbing with empathy for the voiceless, drawing sustenance from a tradition devoid of rancour.

There is no place in his writings for chauvinism and for designs of hegemony. Tagore is concerned with the inner life of man of which the outer is just an extension. Man's inner life has to change for the better, if the world he inherits is to become a better place. It is understandable that the social sciences are occasionally perplexed at this orientation of his thought, for the analysis of which contemporary social sciences have hardly equipped themselves. But it would be vain for them to attack something which for them is nebulous.

The religious writing of a Tagore, offers great depths to the critic, and yields great rewards to a patient, attuned study. The over arching question of social analysis of religion is lucidly answered in Toynbee:

> The social critique of religion is justified on its own social ground; yet it misses its mark if it tries to apply the same argument to the personal field of spiritual experience and endeavour.... The personal belief in transcendence—in an ultimate spiritual reality—cannot be attacked with weapons drawn from the armoury of social criticism.[140]

The deep ore of the social and the historical; the contemplative and the interrogative, that run through Tagore's writings constitutes its relevance for contemporaenity, and for the challenges of the future brought through times which have become restive. After all, as remarked by Hobsbawm, "Can humanity live without the ideals of freedom and justice, or without those who devote their lives to them? Or perhaps even without the memory of those who did so in the twentieth century?"[141]

NOTES

1 Hoebel cited in David Kopf, *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance* (1969) Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 45.

2 Tapan Raychaudhuri, *Perceptions, Emotions, Sensibilities: Essays on India's Colonial and Post-Colonial Experiences,* (1999) Delhi: Oxford University Press, p. 142.

3 Robert J.C. Young, *Post colonialism: An Historical Introduction* (2001) Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., p. 2.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 65.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 65.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 66.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 276.

8 For details see Ira Lapidus, "North Africa in the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries", *A History of Islamic Societies* (1988) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 680–697.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 687.

10 In India, the religious reform movements generally desisted from an overt political assertion or affiliation, in spite of their contribution towards fostering a national cultural identity, flowing from their message of service to the downtrodden. But their message was one of universalism. The Rama Krishna Mission is a case in point. Rolland has written about its socio-political influence on the Indian mind during a particularly eventful period of India's history:

> It repudiates politics. In this it is faithful to the spirit of its master, Vivekananda, who could not find sufficiently strong terms of disgust wherewith to spurn all collusion with politics. And perhaps this has been the wisest course for the mission to pursue. For its religious, intellectual, and social action, eminently pro-Indian as it is, is exercised in the profound and silent depths of the nation, without giving any provocation to the British power to fetter it.

However revolutionary terrorists were on many occasions found to have in their possession copies of Vivekananda's writing, and many were known to have abused the hospitality of the mission and donned the ochre robe to facilitate the designs of secrecy and violence. As a precautionary measure, the Mission obligated its Maths not to receive strangers at night, and earlier it suspended its programme in some part of Bengal during the Swadeshi movement in 1905.

In Rolland's words:

> The Government kept a strict watch over the Mission, but it continued to preach its ideal of social service; it publicly reproved all sectarian and vengeful spirit, and even condemned selfish patriotism, pointing out that eventually it led to degradation and ruin. It replied alike to the accusations of the patriots and the suspicions of the Government by these words of Vivekananda, which were inscribed on the covers of its publications: 'The national ideals of India are Renunciation and Service. Intensify her in those channels and the rest will take care of itself.'

Nevertheless accusations were leveled on it by the Government and measures were even initiated for its dissolution. But petitions in its defence, addressed to the British government, helped in averting any such action.

For details see Romain Rolland, *The Life of Vivekananda And The Universal Gospel* (1997) Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, pp 323–332; Swami Gambhirananda, *History of Ramkrishna Math And Ramkrishna Mission* (1957) Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama.

11 Lapidus, *op cit.*, p. 690.

12 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, tr., Constance Farrington (in English) (1966) New York: Grove Press Inc., p. 48.

13 Young, *op cit.*, p. 285.

14 Amilcar Cabral, *Return to the Source: Selected Speeches by Amilcar Cabral* (1973) New York: Monthly Review Press with Africa Information Service, p. 58.

15 See Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest* (1998) Delhi: Oxford University Press.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 61.

17 James Connolly, *Selected Writings*, ed., P. Beresford Ellis (1988) London: Pluto Press, p.208.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 210–211.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 299.

20 Young, *op cit.*, p. 383.

21 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1995) London: Penguin Books, p. 75.

22 *Ibid.* p., 345.

23 *Ibid.* p., 345.

24 *Ibid.* p., 323.

25 *Ibid.* p., 325.

26 For details see Subhas Chandra Bose, *The Indian Struggle 1920–1942*, ed., Sisir K. Bose & Sugata Bose (1948) Delhi: Oxford University Press.

27 *Ibid.*, p., 179.

28 Meenakshi Mukherjee, "Interrogating Post-colonialism", *Interrogating Post-Colonialism: Theory, Text and Context*, ed., Harish Trivedi & Meenakshi Mukherjee (2000) Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, p. 7.

29 For details see Sisir K. Das, *A History of Indian Literature—1800–1900, Western Impact: Indian Response (2000)* Delhi: Sahitya Akademi.

30 K. Narasimha Murthy, *Modern Kannada Literature* (1992) Bangalore: Pustakalaya Publications, p. 37.

31 Mukherjee, *op cit.*, p. 7.

32 Kenneth & Helen Ballhatchet, "Asia", *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*, ed., John McManners (2001) Oxford: University Press, p. 497.

33 For details see Kenneth and Helen Ballhatchet, "Asia", *op cit.*

34 For details see Julius J. Lipner, "A meeting of ends? Swami Vivekananda And Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya", *Swami Vivekananda and the Modernization of Hinduism* ed., William Radice (1998) Delhi: Oxford University Press.

35 Antony Copley, *Religions in Conflict: Ideology, Cultural Contact And Conversion in Late-Colonial India* (1999) Delhi: Oxford University Press, p. xiii.

36 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 39.

38 Kenneth & Helen Ballhatchet, *op cit.*, p. 495.

39 See back cover of Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth, op cit.*

40 Bose, *op cit.*, p. 334.

41 For details see "The Bengal Situation" in Bose, *op cit.*, pp. 334–340.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 335.

43 Gandhi wrote in the *Young India* in May, 1921: "My faith, however, in the British nation is such that when we have shown sufficient strength of purpose, and undergone enough measure of self-sacrifice, the British people will respond fully. My reading of history is that they do not yield to justice pure and simple. It is too abstract for their common sense. But they are far-seeing enough to respond to justice when it is allied with

force. Whether it is brute force or soul-force, they do not mind." See the *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (1966) Delhi, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, vol. xx. p.157.

44 Bose, *op cit.*, p. 340.

45 William Radice, ed. & tr. *Selected Short Stories of Tagore*, intro., (1994) London, p. 25.

46 E.P. Thompson, ed. *Nationalism* by Tagore, intro., (1991) London, p. 14.

47 Rabindranath Tagore, "Dr. P.K. Acharya on Indian Architecture" (Book Review) in *Visva Bharati Quarterly*, May-July (1935) Calcutta, p. 115.

48 Rabindranath Tagore, *A Vision of India's History* (1988) Calcutta: Visva-Bharati Publishing Department, pp. 42–46.

49 Rabindranath Tagore, "Nababarsha", trans., into English as "The New Year", *Vision of History* by Sibesh Bhattacharya & Sumita Bhattacharya (2003) Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, p. 22.

50 Tagore, "The History of Bharavarsha," *Vision of History, op cit.*, p. 25.

51 Isaiah Berlin, "The HedgeHog And The Fox," *Russian Thinkers* (1994), London: Penguin Books, p. 29.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 31.

53 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

54 *Ibid.*, p. 33.

55 For the details of Tolstoy's fictitious portrayal of real-life characters like Kutuzov, see Berlin, *op cit.*

56 Tagore, *A Vision of India's History* (1988) Calcutta: Visva Bharati, p. 38.

57 *Ibid.*, p. 19.

58 *Ibid.*, p. 31.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 9.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 21.

61 *Ibid.*, p. 31.

62 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

63 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

64 Many Europeans disputed civilizational claims to greatness advanced solely on the criteria of material well being. The eminent historian Arnold Toynbee mentions how in August 1912, while passing through Germany on his way to England from Greece, he was impressed by Germany's urban landscape. He told his fellow historian Sir Alfred Zimmern that, "The mounting curve of civilization which I had followed upwards as I had traveled north-westward, had reached its peak in the Rhineland and had been descending again by the time that I reached

Fokestone." On being asked about the basis of his impression, Toynbee had replied that the buildings of Rhineland had appeared well kept from the ship's deck and railway-carriage window. Zimmern had cautioned: "You must not judge by outward appearances... They are not the thing that matters. What matters is something that is invisible. It is the spirit of the people; and if you judge by that, as you should, you will not find that Germany stands at the peak of human progress." See Arnold Toynbee, *Acquaintances* (1967), London: Oxford University Press, p. 52–53.

65 Romila Thapar, *Narratives and the Making of History* (2004) Delhi: Oxford University Press, p. 20.

66 *Ibid.*, p. 21.

67 Tagore, "The Object and Subject of a Story", *Modern Review*, September, 1918, p. 21.

68 Thapar, *op cit.*, p. 5.

69 *Ibid.*, p. 9.

70 Tagore, "The Religion of the Forest", *Creative Unity, The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore*, (hereafter referred to as Tagore, *Writings*). ed., Sisir Kumar Das (1996) Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, vol. II, p. 511.

71 *Ibid.*, p. 513.

72 Thapar, *op cit.*, p. 9.

73 Tagore, *Writings*, II, p. 515.

74 Thapar, *op cit.*, p. 19.

75 Tagore, *Writings*. II, p. 515.

76 *Ibid.*, p. 515.

77 Tagore read the lecture "The Message of the Forest", on the occasion of the opening of the Festival of Fine Arts in Bangalore in 1919. An extract was published in *Karnataka*, reproduced later in the *Modern Review*, February 1919. The complete version of the essay was published in English in the *Modern Review*, May 1919. Details as given in Tagore, *Writings*, III (1996) p. 974.

78 Tagore, *Writings*, III, p. 394.

79 *Ibid.*, p. 392.

80 *Ibid.*, pp. 391–392.

81 B.N. Ganguli, *Concept of Equality: The Nineteenth Century Indian Debate*, (1975) Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, p. 113.

82 Tagore, *Writings*, II p. 516.

83 Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (1994) London: Vintage, p. 256.

84 Alioune Diop cited in Young, *op cit.*, p. 268.

85 Tagore, *Writings*, II, p. 566.

86 *Ibid.*, p. 564.

87 Sartre, *Black Orpheus*, trans. S.W. Allen (1976) Paris: Présence Africaine, p. 23.

88 Tagore, *The Religion of An Artist* (1988) Calcutta: Visva-Bharati Publishing Department, p. 25.

89 Krishna Dutta & Andrew Robinson *The Myriad Minded Man* (2000) Delhi: Rupa & Co., p. 185.

90 For details see Kjell Espmark, *The Nobel Prize in Literature: A Study of the Criteria Behind the Choices* (1991) Boston.

91 Raychaudhuri, *op cit.*, pp. 141–142.

92 Tagore, *Sadhana*, (2000) Delhi: Macmillan India, p. 7.

93 Shankho Chaudhuri, "A Symposium on Rabindranath's Paintings", *Rabindranath Tagore And The Challenges of Today*, ed., Bhudeb Chaudhuri & K.G. Subramanyam (1988) Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study. p. 138.

94 *Tagore, Writings*, III, pp. 741–42.

95 *Ibid.*, pp. 766–767.

96 For text of letter, see *Ibid.*, 783–785.

97 Niharranjan Ray, *An Artist In Life* (1967) Trivandrum: University of Kerala, p. 178.

98 Tagore, *Crisis In Civilization* (1988) Calcutta: Visva Bharati, p. 19.

99 *Ibid.*, p. 14.

100 Tagore, *Writings*, II, p. 534.

101 *Ibid.*, p. 535.

102 V.S. Naravane, "Tagore's Aesthetics: Concepts of Harmony And Personality," in *Rabindranath Tagore In Perspective: A Bunch of Essays* (1989) Calcutta: Visva-Bharati, p. 2.

103 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

104 Tagore, *Samanjasya* from *Utsarga*. The translation is by Naravane in *Ibid.*, p. 4.

105 Dipankar Home & Andrew Robinson, "Einstein and Tagore: man, nature and mysticism" *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 2.2., 1995, pp. 167–179.

106 Ilya Prigogine, a Nobel Laureate in Chemistry stated clearly: "Curiously enough, the present evolution of science is running in the direction stated by the great Indian poet". See Ilya Prigogine & Isabelle Stengers, *Order out of Chaos: Man's New Dialogue With Nature* (1984) London, p. 293.

107 Tagore, *Writings*, III, p. 912.

108 Tagore, *Sadhana, op cit.*, p. 125.

109 Tagore, *Writings*, III, p. 914.

110 Tagore, *Personality* (1995) Delhi: Macmillan India, p. 4.

111 *Ibid.*, p. 37.

112 Tagore, *Sadhana, op cit.*, pp. 126–127.

113 *Ibid.*, p. 145.

114 Gaston Bachelard saw science, not as a linear progression of truth, but a dialogue between reason and experiment, where even facts are subjective. He influenced Thomas Kuhn who like Alexandre Koyre and Jean Cavilles, contended that science was the "outcome of ruptures, false starts, and imaginative constraints that themselves reflect many variables". Science was thought as being active within a paradigm, which is subject to nature. Complexities such as the nature of objective experience, also make empirical prediction difficult. See the entries on Kuhn, Bachelard, Gestalt Switch, in Simon Blackburn, *Dictionary of Philosophy* (1994) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

115 Undeterred by the scepticism of his compatriots Einstein persisted in this futile quest for the rest of his life. His dogged belief in the certainty of such a principle is exemplified in his statement claiming divine endorsement for his thesis obliquely, "God is subtle but he is not malicious." Friends like Max Born were dismayed by his preoccupation which seemed to hamper his productivity: "Many of us regard this as a tragedy, both for him, as he gropes his way in loneliness, and for us, who miss our leader and standard bearer." Characteristically, after listening to a lecture from the Belgian scientist Abbe Georges Lemaitre, where-in he outlined the theory that the universe had been created by the explosion of a 'primeval atom', and was continuing to expand, Einstein jumped to his feet, applauding the absolutist assumption: "This is the most beautiful and satisfactory explanation of creation to which I have ever listened." For details see "Albert Einstein" in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, ed., Robert Mac Henry (1993) Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc., vol. 18.

116 Tagore, *Sacrifice*, in *Writings*, III, p. 101.

117 *Ibid.*, p. 104.

118 Tagore, *Selected Letters of Rabindranath Tagore* (1997) Cambridge: ed., Krishna Dutta & Andrew Robinson, Cambridge University Press, p. 347.

119 *Ibid.*, p. 486.

120 *Ibid.*, p. 501.

121 *Ibid.*, p. 70.

122 *Ibid.*, p. 199.

123 Gandhi *op cit.*, p. 159. I am grateful for this piece of information to Ramachandra Guha given in his article, "Journals of Opinion". Guha writes:

> 'I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any'. These lines, attributed to Gandhi, are engraven in school and college buildings across the land. Emblematic of a once dominant (and now threatened) strand of Indian nationalism, they have recently acquired a fresh lease of life outside this country. Thus Gandhi's words have been cited in the debates on curriculum reform in the divided campuses of elite American universities. They are, it appears, an argument- clinching mantra for our multicultural times. How many of those who quote these words here or there know how they came to be uttered: In truth, they were squeezed out of a reluctant Mahatma by Rabindranath Tagore. For Gandhi had started this particular argument as a cultural nationalist... and also a political authoritarian who commanded all patriots to take up non-cooperation and a daily round at the *charkha*. Where countless others signed up, unthinkingly, Tagore opposed both the project and the ideals behind it... A wounded Gandhi thereupon pointed out that 'I hope I am as great a believer in free air as the great Poet. I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the land to blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any'... I cannot recall, in the dozens of times I have had the words thrown at me, a single occasion on which the critical first sentence has also been included: *'I hope I am as great a believer in free air as the great Poet.'*

See Ramachandra Guha "Journals of Opinion" in Ramachandra Guha, *The Last Liberal and Other Essays* (2004) Delhi: Permanent Black, pp. 237–246.

124 Tagore, cited in "Appendix" in Gandhi *op cit.*, p. 539.

125 Ranajit Guha, *Dominance Without Hegemony* (1998) Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 109–110.

126 Tagore, *Writings*, III, p. 741.

127 For details see Sujit Mukherjee, *Passage to America* (1964) Calcutta: Book Land, p. 80. Mukherjee writes: 'When the President of the Macmillan Company wrote to the White House in March 1917 on the subject, he was told by the President's adviser, Colonel House, that the British Ambassador had advised against such a move because Tagore was

believed to be involved in the anti-British plots that were bring [sic] hatched in America by Indian revolutionaries.' Cited in *Tagore, Writings*, II, p. 770.

128 Tagore, *Sadhana, op cit.*, p. 143.

129 Gandhi, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, op cit.*, p. 540. Gandhi had responded to 'The Poets Anxiety' as he called it, through an article by the same title in *Young India*, on 1 June, 1921. He sought to allay the Poet's fears that non-cooperation is 'not dignified enough for the India of his vision,' or that it is a doctrine of 'separation, exclusiveness, narrowness and rejection.' He wrote: "On the contrary, non-cooperation is intended to pave the way to real, honourable, and voluntary co-operation based on mutual respect and trust." Apropos Tagore's apprehensions regarding the fallout of non-cooperation on the attitudes of the students in general, Gandhi was of the opinion that English education had anyway failed to help in the maturing of the youth of India. It would help them in the long run if they were to discover the evils of such a system through this movement. He asserted: "If India is ever to attain the Swaraj of the Poet's dream, she will do so only by non-violent non-cooperation. Let him deliver his message of peace to the world, and feel confident that India through her non-cooperation, if she is to remain true to her pledge, will have exemplified his message. Non -cooperation is intended to give the very meaning to patriotism that the Poet is yearning for". pp.161–164.

130 In his Autobiography, Bose has held the Calcutta University authorities and Indian Liberals guilty of misleading Tagore on this issue. He has recounted that during their journey from Europe to Bombay in the same ship, he had discussed the policy of non-cooperation and the Poet was, "by no means hostile to the idea". Bose claims to had found Tagore "completely in accord", with his views, and a little anxious that: "there should be more of constructive activity, so that ultimately a state within the state could be built up, entirely on the non-cooperation and support of the people." Tracing subsequent developments Bose has written: "But immediately after his arrival in India, he was surrounded by a group of people who were opposed to the Non-cooperation movement and who began to point out to him only the short comings of the movement –as well as the personal views of the Mahatma on modern science and modern medicine, which had no connection with the political programme of the Congress. Under the impression that the Non-cooperation Movement was aiming at a break with western science, culture and civilization, the poet ... roundly condemned any attempt to

isolate India from the culture and civilization of the rest of the world and deprecated the boycott of educational institutions." After "several visits" by the Mahatma to "pacify" him, the Poet was "completely disarmed" with the passage of time, and he became one of the "staunchest supporters of the Mahatma's subsequent campaigns". See Bose, *op cit.*, pp. 64–65.

131 Tagore, *Vision of History*, *op cit.*, p. 27.

132 Tagore, *Personality*, *op cit.*, p. 18.

133 Tagore, *Writings*, III, p. 400.

134 Tagore, *The Co-operative Principle*, ed., Pulinbihari Sen (1963) Calcutta: Visva-Bharati, p. 28.

135 Tagore, *Writings*, III, p. 942.

136 Tolstoy disfavoured a political approach to basic problems. As Berlin writes: "Tolstoy rejected political reform because he believed that ultimate regeneration could only come from within, and that inner life was only lived truly in the untouched depths of the mass of people." For details see Berlin, *op cit.*, p. 67.

137 Sen cites this remark from Brecht's diary. See Amartya Sen, "Tagore and his India' in *The Argumentative Indian* (2005) London: Allen Lane, p. 109.

138 Edward Said, Culture and Imperialism, *op cit.* p. 259.

139 *Ibid.*, p. 264.

140 Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History* (1995) London: Thames and London, p. 348.

141 Eric Hobsbawm, *Interesting Times* (2002) London: Abacus, p. 151.

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Faltering First Steps: Early Poems of Rabindranath Tagore and W.B. Yeats

The aim and purpose of this paper is to trace the growth and development of Rabindranath Tagore and W.B. Yeats through their early poems. It is an attempt to recreate the story of the poet by studying his 'inner', rather than his 'outer' life. Tagore himself seems to have given much thought to the idea of such a poetic biography that tried to read the life-story of the poet through his poems. He realized that a poet's true story lies in his poems and that his biography could not be divorced from them. Any attempt to do so would create this divorce and could leave the reader dissatisfied. One finds glimpses of this thought in his essay, 'A Poet's Biography' (1901), a review of Tennyson's biography, 'Alfred, Lord Tennyson: A Memoir' (1897):

> Travellers have ventured into inaccessible terrains to track the sources of rivers.... But I could trace neither the poet, nor the cave from which his verse streamed forth. This may very well be the life of Tennyson, but it is certainly not the life of the poet.... Biography belongs to the great man, poetry to the great poet ... One could write a poetic biography of Tennyson. Its roots would not lie in his material life but in his poetic life: ... If such an account were attempted, one person's effort would be unlike another's. Tennyson's life would take on new forms with different people at different times.[1]

Perhaps it is not easy for a young, fledgling poet or writer to write in the first person and squarely face his readers without first knowing their opinion or reaction to his/her poetry. The art of subterfuge, concealing and fictionalizing the embarrassingly personal is still un-mastered and raw. It is easier perhaps, to acquire a pseudonym or a mask while taking the first few faltering steps when one is still quite unsure of the reaction of the reading public. As Rabindranath Tagore admits candidly in *Reminiscences*: "...I had been searching in impossible places for that which I had within myself. Nothing but want of self-confidence had stood in the way of my coming into my own".[2]

Tagore and Yeats—both well established poets in their times, Nobel Laureates, toast of the intelligentsia and pride of their respective nations—somehow took similar paths while launching their poetic careers. Did the thought of encountering their readers through the printed or written word give them gooseflesh? Did they suffer stage fright as the thought of coming under the microscope of established critics of literature crossed their minds? Perhaps. Or how else could we logically explain why Rabindranath Tagore chose to acquire the pseudonym of Bhanu Singha (in *Bhanu Singha Thakurer Padavali*), and W.B. Yeats put on the garb of Oisin (In 'The Wanderings of Oisin') or sometimes assumed the character of the shepherd (in 'The Song of the Happy Shepherd' and 'The Sad Shepherd')?

The texts that have been taken for reference here are Rabindranath's *Sanchoyita,*[3] a selection of the finest and most popular poems of the poet, compiled by the poet himself near the end of his days, and Yeats's *Collected Poems,*[4] which is a collection of all the poems of Yeats, again arranged and rearranged several times by the poet himself during the span of his career.

Rabindranath's *Sanchoyita*, which is chronologically arranged, unlike Yeats's *Collected Poems*, begins with two poems from *Bhanu Singha Thakurer Padavali*: 'Maran' or Death and 'Proshno' or Question. 'Bhanu' in Bengali literally means the 'Sun', which is also the literal meaning of Rabi or Rabindranath. Thus the poet chose to hide behind the mask of Bhanu Singh while writing his first few poems, perhaps wishing his earliest perceptive readers to discover him through this similarity in names. As Edward Thompson writes in his book, *Rabindranath Tagore. Poet and Dramatist*: "... he made himself a poetical incarnation in a supposed old Vaishnava singer, Bhanu Singh—'Lion of the Sun', with a play frequent in his verse, on the meaning of his name Rabi".[5] Similarly, Yeats, on the other hand wore the mask of Oisin while writing his first big poem 'The Wanderings of Oisin'.

It is quite pertinent perhaps to remember here that the concept of a mask that hides the face of truth is nothing new, and could be traced as far back as the Upanishads. The fifteenth sloka of the Isopanishad possibly contains the earliest reference to mask where the devotee prays to God (or Brahman) to remove the golden disk which covers His face, so that he could see and realize Him who is the Supreme Truth in his own life.

> *Hiranmayena patrena satyasyapihitam mukham*
> *Tat tvam pusannapavrnu satyadharmaya drstaye.*
> [The face of Truth (Brahman in the solar orb) is concealed by a golden vessel. Do thou, O Sun, open it so as to be seen by me who am by nature truthful (or, am the performer of rightful duties)][6]

It is interesting to note here, before one moves into details, that both Tagore and Yeats were firmly rooted in their respective native cultures, as is evident from the texts themselves and their choice of subject matter. In their poetry we get a fragrance of their soil as both poets got inspired by their respective folk traditions. In the case of Rabindranath it was Jayadeva's *Geet Govinda* and the Vaishnava poetry of Vidyapati; and in the case of Yeats it were the tales and legends of Irish heroes like Oisin, Cuchulain, Fergus, Countess Cathleen, etc. At the same time, though they took off from their own soil, their own culture and tradition, they did not remain confined to it for long. As the poets grew in stature and experience, their perspective and ambit also grew broader and wider along with them. So one could say that for both the poets their respective local culture and tradition served as a spring board to gain first a regional status, then a national, and finally an international status.

Bhanu Singha Thakurer Padavali

For Rabindranath, proving himself as a poet meant conforming to the existing old standards of poetry. But being a young man full of fresh ideas and modern perspective, he obviously could not do justice to himself by writing in the archaic mould that was the established norm at that time. His earlier books of poetry—*Sandhya Sangeet* (Evening Songs), *Prabhat Sangeet* (Morning Songs), *Chhobi-o-Gaan* (Pictures and Songs) had already received adverse criticism from the so-called pundits of literature. So the question before this young poet perhaps would have been—how to make these self-styled critics sit up and take notice of him and at the same time enjoy a laugh at their expense. Interestingly, one of the persons who perhaps unknowingly goaded the poet into attempting such a project was the poet's own sister-in-law, Kadambari Devi, who, through her criticisms, appreciations, and at times scathing remarks on the young poet's writings, inadvertently helped him to stretch himself and realize his own true potential. Although Rabindranath developed a lasting and very meaningful relationship with Kadambari Devi which grew and matured with time as the years passed, at this juncture however, he was having fun and secretly enjoying himself by fooling her also into believing that he had found the manuscript of a Vaishnava poet named Bhanu Singh on the shelf of an old library. In his *Reminiscences* he writes:

> I was a keen student of the series of old Vaishnava poems which were being collected and published by Babus Akshay Sarkar and Sarod Mitter. Their language, largely mixed with Maithili, I found difficult to understand; but for that very reason I took all the more pains to get at their meaning.... My enthusiasm was kept up with the hope of bringing to light some unknown poetical gems, as I went

> deeper and deeper into the unexplored darkness of this treasure-house. While I was so engaged, the idea got hold of me of enfolding my own writings in just such a wrapping of mystery.... To my friend (Akshay Chowdhury) I said one day: "A tattered old manuscript has been discovered while rummaging in the Adi Brahma Samaj library, and from this I have copied some poems by an old Vaishnava poet named Bhanu Singha;" with which I read some of my imitation poems to him. He was profoundly stirred.[7]

It is worth remembering that Tagore was hardly fifteen or sixteen when he wrote these Bhanu Singha poems and the language in which he wrote them was not Bengali, but Maithili—a language which he had never learnt through the conventional method. Therefore, this was no small feat for a young boy of this age!

He further writes gleefully how these Bhanu Singh poems misled Vaishnava enthusiasts of that time:

> When these Bhanu Singha poems were coming out in the *Bharati* (a Bengali magazine brought out by the Tagore's family press), Dr. Nishikanta Chatterjee was in Germany. He wrote a thesis on the lyric poetry of our country comparing it with that of Europe. Bhanu Singha was given a place of honour as one of the old poets, such as no modern writer could have aspired to. This was the thesis on which Nishikanta Chatterjee got his Ph.D.![8]

One could say perhaps, that through this supposed discovery of a manuscript, the poet was also discovering himself and proving his worth to the outside world. Tagore was deeply inspired by the Vaishnava poetry of Vidyapati and Jayadeva's *Geeta Govinda*. His *Bhanu Singh Thakurer Padavali* consists of twenty poems, which are explorations of the relationship between Radha and Krishna. But who is this Krishna of Tagore's Padavali that is patterned on Jayadeva's *Geeta Govinda* and Vidyapati's poetry? And who is Tagore's Radha? Are they just the mythological Radha and Krishna about whose love and relationship (or *leela*) various stories, legends and folklores have grown up since time immemorial? Or do they have a deeper and more secret connection with the poet's own life? Are the characters in Tagore's poetry just mythical, or do they have any autobiographical connection also? Is it possible that Rabindranath is using these characters and the story of Radha and Krishna as a disguise for communicating the story of a relationship that is much more deeply rooted in his own life?

At one level one could see the poet as Radha, yearning for union with Krishna—the Almighty (or Jeebon Debota). For example, in the poem 'Maran' (or Death),[9] which is the first poem of *Sanchoyita*, Radha (or the Poet) pleads death to come and take her in his arms, because he is like her own Shyam (or the dark-skinned one), having the same colour as the dark clouds, the same flowing dark hair, the same red lips and hands like red lotuses with which it will take away all her sufferings by touching her lips with the nectar of death. For Radha, death is like nectar, as it will mitigate the pain that Shyam has inflicted upon her by forgetting her. Death will never desert her after taking her in his embrace. He will not break her heart as Krishna has done by leaving her, but will take her in his arms and keep her there forever. 'Death' in this context may also be a connotation of the final union or the final consummation, which could simultaneously be both physical and spiritual.

At another and perhaps more autobiographical level, there is a deeper connection between the relationship of Radha and Krishna of *Bhanu Singha Thakurer Padavali* and the story of a certain relationship which not only played a very central part in the poet's own life, but references to which keep recurring again and again in his poetry like a refrain. Rabindranath was a shy young lad when he wrote these poems and perhaps was not confident enough to make these poems very public. One of the persons who read and appreciated these poems was Kadambari Devi, and it was she who urged Rabindranath to get them published. Much later, when the poet did ultimately publish them, the lady behind this inspiration was no longer alive. Hence the dedication to the Padavali says: "You had requested me many times to publish *Bhanu Singha Thakurer Padavali.* At that time I did not keep your request. Today I have published them, but you are no longer able to see them"[10] (translation mine).

However, the connections and depths of meaning do not seem to end there only. In some ways the poem 'Maran' (or Death) could be seen as rather prophetic: If the Radha of the *Padavali* poems is patterned on Kadambari Devi who is yearning for Shyam's love (but who is this Shyam who always remains in the dark and never reveals himself?), then this relationship ultimately finds consummation in the death of the sad and lonely Radha, who is asking Shyam to come in the form of death and take her in his embrace. It is important to remember here that 'Death' in both Vaishnava literature and in Baul poetry which had a deep impact on Rabindranath, is nothing to be feared because death is not the end of life. On the contrary, it is something to be welcomed, as it leads to the ultimate union of the beloved with the lover, or the devotee with his God. Rabindranath wrote a lot on death and many a time the same concept of death is found in his poetry too. This particular poem somehow becomes prophetic in the light of Kadambari Devi's early death. She did actually embrace death and did not wait for it to come till she was 'old and grey and full of sleep', like Yeats's heroine. She welcomed death with open arms like Radha does in 'Maran'. Is this why she is eternally young, pure and beautiful in the poet's memory and imagination: 'forever.... She be fair' like Keats's 'Ode to a Grecian Urn'?

The selection and ordering of the poems in *Sanchoyita* was done by Rabindranath himself, although he was quite doubtful about taking up this task into his own hands. In the Preface to *Sanchoyita,* the poet says: 'I have taken the responsibility of editing and compiling the poems of *Sanchoyita* upon myself. Perhaps I should have given this task to someone else, because the internal history of each poem is very clear to the one who writes them. In certain cases it is difficult for him to ascertain whether they have been successful (or shone) in their outward expression or not' (translation mine). Does this ordering of the poems by the poet himself become equally significant in the light of the above comment? Rabindranath placed the poem 'Maran' at the beginning of *Sanchoyita.* Does this speak volumes about his relationship with Kadambari Devi—the everlasting impression that she left on the poet's mind while she was alive and the yawning void that she left in his life with her death? Could the very first poem be a sort of dedication to his muse, his supreme love? The shadow of Kadambari Devi hovers over a lot of Tagore's poetry. Sometimes this shadow lingers in the wings and at other times she is clearly visible as the *Chhobi* or picture or image on the wall in front of the poet's eyes. Is the poet dedicating the finest poems from his collection to the lady who first saw the light of youth in his eyes; who first ignited the flame of passion in his young heart; and who first fanned the ambitions of a budding poet? The poet's heroine who was so tantalizingly near, and yet always remained out of reach?

The Wanderings of Oisin

When we move to Yeats's poetic career we discover that although his *Collected Poems* begins with the poem 'The Song of the Happy Shepherd' from the volume *Crossways*, 'The Wanderings of Oisin' is chronologically written much earlier. According to Yeats, he had written this poem when he was only twenty years old, perhaps even earlier. It was published in 1889 and is usually considered his first publication.

The poem is in the form of a conversation between Oisin and St. Patrick, where Oisin represents the heroic, pre-Christian (even anti-Christian) pagan Irish beliefs and ideals and St. Patrick being the person who introduced Christianity in Ireland, represents the Christian Church, which shuns all kinds of physical, sensual and sexual pleasures and makes man subservient to God and the Church. Oisin is also perhaps a mask or mouthpiece of the poet. Therefore in the opening lines of the poem when St. Patrick tells Oisin:

You who are bent, and bald, and blind,
With a heavy heart and a wandering mind,
Have known three centuries, poets sing,
Of dalliance with a demon thing. (II. 1–4)[11]

One feels that these words are directed towards Yeats as well, who has known or read three centuries of poetry where poets have had to grapple with 'a demon thing', i.e., 'imagination'.

With these words we are transported to the land of imagination where Oisin remembers:

The horsemen with their floating hair,
And bowls of barley, honey, and wine,
Those merry couples dancing in tune,
And the white body that lay by mine. (II. 7–10)[12]

The poet could possibly be remembering Maud Gonne just as Oisin remembers Niamh when he refers to 'the white body' that lay beside him. But since the poet could not express his emotions directly to his lady love, he must say it through his poetry, even if he has to disguise himself as an old Irish hero, because: 'the tale, though words be lighter than air, must live to be old like the wandering moon.' (II. 11–12)[13] and remind us of his love for Maud Gonne, long after he is no more.

Although in real life Yeats could not explore his relationship with Maud Gonne as fully or as closely as Oisin could with Niamh, she is constantly present in his thoughts and imagination whenever he is describing or talking of Niamh. The line 'But what cared I that set him on to ride,/I, starved for the bosom of his fairy bride',[14] is quite a candid admission of his feelings for Maud Ganne much later in life in 'The Circus Animal's Desertion'. In the lines below, is it too difficult to detect the real hero when Niamh says:

I loved no man, though kings besought,
Until the Danaan poets brought

Rhyme that rhymed upon Oisin's name,
And now I am dizzy with the thought
Of all the wisdom and the fame
Of battles broken by his hands,
Of stories builded by his words
That are like coloured Asian birds
At evening in their rainless lands. (II. 62–70)[15]
(Italics mine)

Yeats silently wishes that Maud Gonne will recognize and appreciate him as a poet. It is true that the lady was indeed impressed by the young poet, and simultaneously he too fell in love with her the moment her saw her for the first time, standing beside a heap of apple blossoms by the window. In his *Autobiographies* he writes: 'she seemed a classical impersonation of the Spring, the Virgilian commendation 'She walks like a goddess' made for her alone. Her complexion was luminous, like that of apple-blossom through which the light falls, and I remember her standing the first day by a great heap of such blossoms in the window'[16] (from *The Trembling of the Veil*, Book I, Section V). So the lines

O Patrick, by your brazen bell,
There was no limb of mine but fell
Into a desperate gulph of love!' (II. 71–73)[17]

are also autobiographical in their essence. It was, as is said, 'love at first sight'. A little later, Oisin tells Niamh:

I Will make a thousand songs,
And set your name all names above,
And captives bound with leathern thongs
Shall kneel and praise you one by one,' (II. 75–78)[18] (Italics mine)

These words are very intuitive in their essence, because in reality as we know, Yeats commemorates Maud Gonne and explores his (actual or imagined) relationship with her in many of his poems. He sings a thousand songs for her and sets her name above all names in his poetry. Perhaps the 'captives' of Oisin are the 'words' of his poetry which he binds together to praise her. Only in the land of imagination and in the land of poetry, could Yeats know the Danaan leisure, where Maud Gonne could be his wife: 'And you shall know the Danaan leisure;/And Niamh be with you for a wife' (II. 101–2).[19] And thus when Niamh calls to Oisin to mount beside her and ride away:

> O Oisin, mount by me and ride
> To shores by the wash of the tremulous tide,
> Where men have heaped no burial-mounds,
> And the days pass by like a wayward tune,
> Where broken faith has never been known,
> And the blushes of first love never have flown;
> (II. 80–86)[20]

The poet's thoughts leap up to ride away with her into the land of poetry and imagination, where there is neither death ('no burial mounds'), nor 'broken faith'. It is a land of eternal youthfulness and faithfulness, where the 'blushes of first love' have never flown. This is the land of poetry and imagination which cannot exist when logic and reason are shining brightly like the day-time sun and it needs the soothing, lingering shadows of twilight when the 'white moon climbs' into the sky:

> It grows late,
> Music and love and sleep await,
> Where I would be when the white moon climbs,
> The red sun falls and the world grows dim.
> (II. 102–5)[21]

Yeats, like Oisin, is deaf to all the admonitions of St. Patrick, when he says: 'You are still wrecked among heathen dreams.' (1.31)[22] In a Foreword to *The Poetry of W.B. Yeats* by Louis Macneice, Richard Ellman makes the following comment: 'The poets who went up to Oxford in the 1920s were puzzled whether to consider Yeats a monument or a folly.... Even as an older man he persisted in exploring themes such as personal love and general ruin which the younger poets would have liked to reserve for themselves. His behaviour was much less congenial to them than T.S. Eliot's. Eliot was proceeding with stately anguish into middle age and spirituality, while Yeats advanced precipitously, without this American decorum, upon old age and corporeality.'[23] Ellman also writes how Macneice himself criticized Yeats in 1938 (in *Modern Poetry*) for living in a 'largely private world', for being 'utterly individualistic' and 'egoistic' (ibid).

Thus the poet is true to his ideal till the end, and proves with his poetry that he will 'mock at Death and Time with glances,/ And wavering arms and wandering dances.' (II. 274–5).[24] He has vowed that:

> Never, never on our graves,
> Heaped beside the glimmering waves,
> Shall fall the leaves of damask roses.
> For neither Death nor Change comes near us,
> And all listless hours fear us,
> And we fear no dawning morrow,
> Nor the grey wandering osprey Sorrow.'
> (II. 313–19)[25]

The Poet finding his own voice: *The Awakening of the Waterfall*

After trying out different patterns of poetry and various personas, we can finally see Tagore finding his own voice in '*Nirjharer Swapnabhango*' or 'The Awakening of the Waterfall'. Perhaps this is the first poem where the poet in him has started to form wings inside the chrysalis, as this is his first confident utterance or expression, and if one reads all of his earlier poems, then one is struck by the freshness of this one. It makes the reader sit up and take notice. The voice of the poet becomes stronger and surer, as he tries to give words to the 'spontaneous overflow of powerful emotions'. However, he is still groping for words and the right expression, as he is hit by these powerful emotions that come rushing and swirling like the waters of a cataract. But one could say that after the first few faltering steps the toddler has started walking more steadily. Now he doesn't need a mask or pseudonym like 'Bhanu Singh' to put forth his ideas. There is such a rush of inspiration from within his soul that the words and images just pour out incessantly. As the poet himself reminisces on the morning when he wrote this poem in *Reminiscences*:

> 'One morning I happened to be standing on the verandah... The sun was just rising through the leafy tops of those trees. As I continued to gaze, all of a sudden a covering seemed to fall away from my eyes, and I found the world bathed in a wonderful radiance, with waves of beauty and joy swelling on every side. This radiance pierced in a moment through the folds of sadness and despondency which had accumulated over my heart, and flooded it with this universal light. That very day, the poem, *The Awakening of the Waterfall*, gushed forth and coursed on like a veritable cascade. The poem came to an end, but the curtain did not fall upon the joy aspect of the Universe'.[26]

According to one of Tagore's earliest biographers, Edward Thompson (in *Rabindranath Tagore Poet and Dramatist*), '*The Awakening of the Waterfall* is the key poem of *Morning Songs*. The sudden freedom which has come to him finds clamorous expression in the fierce vigour of its movement, the passionate happiness of its pictures.

The mountain trembles, the stones
In vast screes clattering pour;
The waters, swelling and foaming,
In anger and tumult roar;
In their mighty exultation
They would rend the mountain asunder;

Mad with the morning's rays,
Through earth they would crash and thunder.
....
And I–I will pour of compassion a river;
The prisons of stones I will break, will deliver;
I will flood the earth, and, with rapture mad,
Pour music glad.
With dishevelled tresses, and gathering flowers,
With rainbow wings widespread, through the hours
I shall run and scatter my laughter bright
In the dear sunlight.
I shall run from peak to peak, and from hill
To hill my leaping waters spill,
Loudly shall laugh and with claps keep time
To my own step's chime.'[27]

The images used in this poem are not only happy in their tone, but at the same time have a sense of newness and a feeling of opening out. The waterfall becomes a metaphor of freedom and of youthful expression. It is as if a spring was coiled around the spirit of the poet, and this spring has suddenly burst (or has got uncoiled), releasing the poetic spirit and enabling it to express itself freely. The mountains of inhibition which had so far withheld the fountain of poetry, could no longer restrain it, as it is touched by the 'morning's rays' and bursts forth like a 'crash' of 'thunder' because now the waters of poetry are 'swelling and foaming' and roaring in 'anger and tumult' for being chained and held back for so long. It will now break the 'prison of stones'. Through this poem the poet also proclaims his wish (or declares his plan) to write romantic poetry: 'I will pour of compassion a river'—the river of his poetry will sing about people, places, relationships with compassion. It 'will deliver', 'will flood the earth, and with rapture mad,/pour music glad'. The youthful poet does not want his poetry to be limited, but he wants it to fly 'with rainbow wings widespread', to have all the colours, feelings, thoughts and emotions that exist in the life of men.

Enter the real world: *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*

The Lake Isle of Innisfree is possibly one of the first poems where the real world enters into Yeats's poetry. Since it is not possible for someone like Yeats to remain isolated forever in the world of dreams, sooner or later he would have had to face the real world and find ways of bringing it within the purview of his created poetic world. That happens, perhaps for the first time in *The Lake Isle of Innisfree,* where there is an intermingling of the real and the dream worlds. Also noticeable is the fact that the 'I' in the poem refers to the poet himself and he is not speaking through any mask or pseudonym.

> I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
> And a small cabin build there of clay and wattles made:
> Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee
> And live alone in the bee-loud glade.
>
> (II. 1–4)[28]

The poet still wishes to escape, to fly, to go away, but where? Now he does not go wandering into a dream-world like Oisin. Although the note of escapism is still there, but now it is infused with elements of reality, so that the dream world and the real world get converged into an ideal world. The poet wishes to arise and go to a place called Innisfree, which is a real island off the coast of Sligo where Yeats spent a large part of his childhood in very idyllic surroundings. But in Innisfree too he wants to create an ideal world for himself with a 'small cabin' built 'of clay and wattles', 'nine bean-rows' and 'a hive for the honey-bee'. And here he wants to live in peace 'alone in the bee-loud glade,' undisturbed by the encroaching world because he is still not ready for the 'roadway' or the 'pavements grey' and 'always night and day' he keeps hearing in his 'deep heart's core', 'lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore'.

Conclusion

I have tried to read the early years of the life of the poets Rabindranath Tagore and William Butler Yeats through some of the poems written during the earlier part of their development as poets. The first faltering steps point to the path that becomes more and more defined as they move ahead poem by poem. These poems begin a journey that will move through the entire body of their poetry. Being probably unsure of themselves and the reaction of their readers, both the poets started with masks or pseudonyms imbibed from their respective folklores, legends or myths (Bhanu Singha or Oisin!), growing more confident with experience, and finally dropping all pretences altogether. One could see this evolution through the Spanish poet Juan Ramon Jimenez's poetry which he calls *Poesia desnuda* or the Naked Poetry because Tagore acted as a stimulus for Juan Ramon and critics feel that in one of his poems which has been called 'Naked Poetry' and which becomes the turning point of his career, he is indebted to poem no. 7 of Gitanjali (My song has put off her adornments) and also to the poem 'A Coat' by Yeats. All the three poems are quoted below to show how Tagore and Yeats's and Jiminez's poetry move from myths and adornments to the direct naked voice of the maturing poet.

My song has put off her adornments

My song has put off her adornments.
She has no pride of dress and decoration.
Ornaments would mar our union;
they would come between thee and me;
their jingling would drown thy whispers.
My poet's vanity dies in shame before thy sight.
O master poet, I have sat down at thy feet.
Only let me make my life simple and straight,
like a flute of reed for thee to fill with music.[29]

A Coat

I made my song a coat
Covered with embroideries
Out of old mythologies
From heel to throat;
But the fools caught it,
Wore it in the world's eyes
As though they'd wrought it.
Song, let them take it, for there's more enterprise
In walking naked.[30]

Naked Poetry

Maiden, at first she met me
all clothed in innocence,
and I loved her like a child.
Then she was dressing up
in goodness knows what fancies;
I hated her, not knowing why.
She even became a queen,
magnificent in her treasures ...
What gall and bitterness, and oh, what nonsense!
... Then she began undressing,
and I could smile upon her.
Soon she was left in her shift,
in her former innocence;
I believed in her once more.
Then she took off even that
and appeared before me naked ...
oh, passion of all my life! oh, poetry
naked and mine forever![31]

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Socio-Juristic Position of an Ātatāyī Brāhmaṇa

The category of *Ātatāyī Brāhmaṇa* reflects climax of socio-juristic injustice.[1] There is no denying the fact that the Hindu social order was founded upon the principle of social hierarchy, caste privileges, and socio-juristic inequalities.[2] There had been an inseparable relationship between the social system and the theory and practice of law and justice in ancient India.[3] In spite of the fact that caste privileges and social status invariably played a determining role in the administration of law and justice, it is historically not correct to say that the ethical consciousness and sense of juristic fairness were almost lacking in the Hindu social-order.[4] No doubt, the Brāhmaṇas were immune from capital punishment from quite early times[5] and the killing of a Brāhmaṇa was one of the most heinous sins and unpardonable crimes but this well-recognized principle had exceptions also which reflect upon the high ethical and moral standards and fair and rational juristic values of the Hindus. The position of an *Ātatāyī Brāhmaṇa* which has engaged the attention of almost all the *Smṛitikāras* and *nibandhakāras* till quite recent times, may throw interesting light upon this aspect of the socio-legal system of the Hindus. If it was a well recognized custom of the land that a Brāhmaṇa is not to be killed[6], it was equally a well-established law that an *ātatāyin* in general must be killed.[7] How these two principles are to be upheld in the case of a person who was a Brāhmaṇa as well as an *ātatāyin*, was a problem with all the law-givers and digest-writers till quite modern times when the immunity of the Brāhmaṇas came to be scrapped by the law. Behind the principle of the immunity of the Brāhmaṇas from capital punishment lies the foundation of social hierarchy and *Varnāśramadharma* which was the sine *quo non* of the Hindu social organization while the theory of killing an *ātatāyin* was based upon the principle of juristic fairness as it was believed that wrath meets wrath.[8]

Definition and Meaning of Ātatāyin

It is desirable to know the meaning and definition of the term *ātatāyin.* It is formed from the root *ātan* = to stretch (a bow for shooting). Thus it literally means one who goes with his bow strung (i.e. ready to kill or fight). As pointed out by F.F. Pargiter,[9] "it was applied to cases of murderous assault without any reference to a bow. It appears that the literal meaning emphasizes the evil intention and violent means to achieve one's evil end which go to make an *ātatāyin.* It is from this point of view that as early as the later Vedic age, Śiva has been called an *ātatāyin* because he as Rudra harms and kills his opponents. Rudra is essentially a malevolent god and his weapons of offence are often mentioned.[10] Rudra is called several times as a robber, a cheat, a deceiver, etc.[11] In view of this it is quite natural to give the epithet of *ātatāyī* to Śiva because the term, *ātatāyī* as will be clear from later definitions, means a robber, a deceiver, a murderer and an author of several such violent and unsocial acts. It is interesting to reveal that in the literature the word *ātatāyī* has been used in all these senses. At one place in the *Mahābhārata* (III, 36, 1420) it is used to mean a killer. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (VI, 6.24) it is used in the widened sense of a robber of property, enemy, etc. At another place in the *Mahābhārata* (III, 41.1695) it is used in a general sense of an injurer, thus an *ātatāyī* was a person actuated by murderous or similar dangerous intent.

The *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* (III. 15.8) which is older than Manu and is later than Gautama[12] gives one of the earliest definitions of an *ātatāyī* as follows:

उग्निदो गरद चैव शस्त्रपाणिर्धनापह।
क्षेत्रदाराहर चैव षडेते ह्याततायिनः।।

In his opinion an incendiary, a poisoner, one armed with a weapon, a robber, one who wrests a field or carries away one's wife—these six are called *ātatāyin*. An analysis of this definition reveals to us that an unlawful act coupled with violence which endangers the life of the victim or his defender is the basis of an *ātatāyin*. The *Mahābhārata* (Śānti, 15.55) defined it in a general way as follows:

आततायी हि यो हन्यादाततायिनमागतम्।

Here also the intention of killing and the choice of a violent method are prominent symptoms of an *ātatāyin*. This contention is repeated in the *Mahābhārata* several times (Śānti Parva, 34, 17, 19). Manu (VIII, 350–351) also emphasizes this aspect of an *ātatāyin*. Most of the *Smṛitikāras* have followed the *Manusmṛiti* and the *Mahābhārata* and it is interesting to find that the comprehensive and all-pervasive definition of Vasiṣṭha was not followed. The *Viṣnu Dharmasútra* presents an exception in this respect as it broadens the ambit of the *ātatāyī*-concept. According to Viṣṇu (V. 191–192) there are seven types of persons, who may be called as *ātatāyin*:

उद्यतासिविषाग्नि च शापोद्यतकरन्तथा।
आथर्वणेन हन्तारं पिशु चैव राजसु।।
भागर्यातिक्रमिण चैव विद्यात् सप्ताततायिनः।।

An attacker with violent weapons, an incendiary, a poisoner, an assaulter of another's wife—four from this list are common with those listed in the *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasùtra*. The remaining three are additions and these are as follows: one who has raised his hand to give a curse, one who sets about to kill by the magic rites, mentioned in the *Atharvaveda* and one who is a back-biter and informs the king. These types are not connected with physical violence but are associated with spiritual powers and moral values which are of such gravity that they result in grave harm on even death of the victim. In the *Atharvaveda*[13] there are several magical formulae, which are employed to bring about the destruction of the person aimed at. A back-biter who informs the king is guilty of a breach of trust and may be responsible for bringing about the ruin of the person. Thus in the opinion of Viṣṇu (AD 100–A.D. 300), the dominant element in the mental make up of an *ātatāyin* is the 'intention to kill' whether with the help of a violent weapon or with magical formulae or simply by means of a breach of trust. Kātyāyana (AD 400-600) as quoted by *Vyavahāramayūkha* (AD 1610–1650 p. 241) follows Viṣṇu:

उदयतासिविषाग्निश्च शापोद्यतकरस्तथा
आथर्वणेन हन्ता च पिशुनचापि राजनि।।
भार्य्यातिक्रमकारी च रन्ध्रयन्वेपणतत्परः
एवमाद्यान्विजानीयात्सर्वानेवाततायिनः।।

The *Matsya Purāṇā* (ch. 227, 117–119) widens the scope of the meaning of *ātatāyin*. It narrates the following as types of *ātatāyin:* those who rob one of his house or field; those who attempt prohibited intercourse; the incendiary; the poisoner; he who threatens one with a weapon; he who employs evil incantations; and he who utters calumny against the king—these are designated as *ātatāyins*. The incendiary, the poisoner, the stealer of valuable property, the murderer of a sleeping person, robber of field and of wife—these six are *ātatāyins*. He, who endeavours to kill the king, he who is prone to the murder of his father and mother and a king, he who pursues his own king—these four are also *ātatāyin*. Thus "the term was then extended in its scope and applied as a legal term characterizing various heinous offences less directly involving dangerous intent."[14] That is why Āpastamba uses the word *himsārtham*, not *ātatāyin*.

The *Smṛti Candrikā* (AD 1200–1225) tells us of three categories of *ātatāyins*, namely: one who rushes upon a man to kill him; one who forcibly seizes another's field, or takes away another's wife. It appears that Devanabhatta followed Vasiṣṭha. In this definition, emphasis is laid upon physical violence. In the first case, the intention to kill is very much present but in the other two categories, the intention is simply to deprive a man of his field or wife. Aparārka (AD 1125, p. 1043) suggests that persons are to be regarded as *ātatāyins* while they set fire or kill or they are in the act of setting fire or killing and the like. In this definition, the time factor is also relevant, apart from the aim. The *Śabdalalpadruma* enumerates six types of *ātatāyins* namely: (1) one who sets fire, (2) one who gives poison, (3) one with weapons in hand, (4) one who takes away wealth, (5) one who takes away land, (6) one who kidnaps wife:

आग्निदो गरदश्चैव शस्त्रपाणिर्धनापहः।
क्षेत्रदारापहारी च षड़ेते ह्याततायिनः।।
आततायिनमायान्तं हन्यादेवाविचारयन्।
नाततायिवधे दोषो हन्तुर्भवति कश्चन।।
इति भगवद्गीताटीकायां श्रीचरस्वामी।

Thus a person may be called an *ātatāyin* if he is responsible for any type of ruin of a person whether physical, economic or moral. The intention to harm gravely appears to be at the root of this concept. This intention is to be carried out by force, which may be physical or spiritual. In later days, the spiritual force as a means to cause harm and death came to be discounted and in the medieval period the concept of an *ātatāyin* came to be confined only to the doer of the physical violence.[15]

Position and Privileges of an *Ātatāyī Brāhmaṇa*

The position and privileges of an *ātatāyī* Brāhmaṇa[16] shed interesting light on the problem of Brāhmaṇa's complete immunity from corporal punishment versus the individual's right to self-defence. Both are well recognized *smṛiti* principles. Kane has rightly observed that 'a question that very much exercised the minds of all *Smṛitikāras* and writers of digests was whether a Brāhmaṇa who was himself guilty of violence or serious offences could be killed in self-defence by the attacked one.[17] As early as Vasiṣṭha, the right to self-defence is given precedence over the caste-privilege, as he expressly says (*Vasiṣṭhadharmasùtra*, III, 17-18) that an *ātatāyin* may be killed even though he be a complete master of the *Vedānta* and born of a good family. Such action will not render the doer a Brāhmaṇa-murderer:

आततायिनमायान्तमपि वेदान्तपारगम् ।
जिघासन्तं जिघार्सीयान्न तेन भ्रूणहा भवेत् ।।
स्वाघ्यायिनं कुले जातं यो हन्यादाततायिनम् ।
न तेन ब्रह्महा स भवति मन्युस्तं मन्यु म च्छति ।।

This has obviously a reference to a Brāhmaṇa *ātatāyin*, as a complete master of *Vedānta* can be no other than a Brāhmaṇa according to the prevailing theory of the *Viarṇaśramadharma*. In the age of Vasiṣṭha, the Brāhmaṇas as a privileged class came to be well established, but it was also expected in this age that they should adhere to the moral discipline and conscientiously perform the duties laid down by the *śāstras* for them. If they deviate from this path there can be no harm in neglecting them.[18] Many other law-givers of the time testify to the fact that the law of self-defence which was well recognized in their age, could over-ride caste-privileges. Even before Vasiṣṭha, the *Gautama Dharmasūtra* (600–300 BC, VII. 25) says that when life is in danger, even a Brāhmaṇa may take up a weapon (प्राणसंशये ब्राह्मणो पि शस्त्रमाददीत). As pointed out by B. Bhattacharya here the term *api* indicates that in the case of self-defence the caste privileges are overlooked, and it was a general rule for all castes.[19] The *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* (I.18.11–12; C.B.C 600–300) clearly states that a teacher, born in a worthy family, if he is an *ātatāyin*, may be killed; thereby one incurs no sin of destroying a foetus:

भीतमत्तोन्मत्तप्रमत्तविसग्नाहस्त्रीबालव द्धबाह्मणेनं ।
युध्येतान्यत्राततायिनः । अथाप्युदाहरन्ति ।
अघ्यापकं कुले जाते यो हन्यादाततायिनम ।
न तेन भ्रूणहा भवति मन्युस्तं म त्युम च्छतीति ।

Thus, he cites an ancient law also in this respect which shows that long before Baudhayana, the law of self-defence vis-á-vis an *ātatāyī* Brāhmaṇa was well established in India. Similarly, the *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra* (I. 29.7; 600–300 BC) recognizes this law which according to him is an ancient law:

> यो हिंसार्थमभिक्रान्तं हन्ति मन्युरेव मान्युं
> स्प शति न तस्मिन्दोष इति पुराणे।

It appears that Āpastamba finds, besides the law of self-defence, an additional justification for killing an *ātatāyi* Brāhmaṇa in his belief that a Brāhmaṇa should not touch a weapon even for examination (परीक्षार्थोपि ब्राह्मण आयुद्ध नाददीत). It is interesting to note that Āpastamba quotes as his authority for this rule not any law-book but a *Purāna*. Pargiter[20] argues that it is probably from the *Matsya Purāna* that he has taken this maxim of popular justice as, according to him, only the *Matsya Purānā* and the *Padma Purānā* declared this maxim explicitly. In the opinion of the present author, the reference to *Purānā* here is meant to refer to ancient tradition in a general way, and the reference has nothing to do with any specific *Purāna.* Pargiter's position is simply untenable because there are insuperable chronological difficulties.

Thus in the age of the Dharmasùtra (600–300 BC) birth was not the only criterion, for other attributes such as spiritual quality, high ethical standards and unimpeachable integrity also went to make a Brāhmaṇa in the real sense of the term.[21] Later on Manu summarizes a Brāhmaṇa in two terms—*Brahmadharma* and *Niyamadharma.*[22] It was in the context of this social philosophy that Vasiṣṭha and other Dharmasūtra-kāras could allow the killing of a master of the *Vedānta*-type desperado of a good family because by deviating from the permitted path, the Brāhmaṇas lose their privileges.[23] As such the *ātatāyin* is a class by itself and cannot get protection under the cover of caste-privileges according to Vasiṣṭha, Gautama, Baudhāyana and Āpastamba.

Let us examine the position of an *ātatāyī* Brāhmaṇa in the post-Vedic period.

The *Mahābhārata* states the position of an *ātatāyī* Brāhmaṇa to be similar. Even the last half verse of the *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* as quoted above is repeated. The Śāntiparva 15.55 reads as follows:

आततायी हि यो हन्यादाततायिनमागतम् ।
ने तेन भ्रूणहा सं स्यान्मन्युस्तं मन्युम च्छति ।।

There are several other verses of similar import in the *Mahābhārata*. For instance, it is said that if in a battle a Brāhmaṇa approaches wielding a weapon with the intention of killing a person, the latter may in defence kill him, even if the Brāhmaṇa is an expert in the Vedic lore:

प्रग हशस्त्रमायन्तमति वेदान्तगं रणे ।
जिघांसन्तं जिघांसीयान्न तेन ब्रह्महा भवेत् ।।

From what follows it is clear that the *Mahābhārata* considers even a learned Brāhmaṇa as an *ātatāyī* if he takes up arms even in battle with a view to killing a person as it says (Śānti Parva, 35.19):

अपेतं च ब्राह्मणं व ताद्यी हन्यादाततायिनम् ।
न तेन ब्रह्महा स स्थान मान्युस्तं मन्युम च्छति ।।

It is interesting to find that the above rule permitting the killing of an *ātatāyī* Brāhmaṇa is sanctioned by the Vedas according to the *Mahābhāratā* (Śànti Parava, 34.18):

इति चापत्रय कौंतेय मन्त्रों वंदेषु पठ्यते ।
वेदप्रमाणविहितं धर्म च प्रब्रीमि ते ।

Actually, the Śānti Parva (34.19) is cited as an evidence of this statement. A Brāhmaṇa fighting in a battle may be equated with an *ātatāyī* Brāhmaṇa because both are the aggressors armed with the weapon and are bent upon killing. The Udyoga Parva (178.27-28) of the Mahābhāratā states this position in quite unmistakable terms:

उद्येतेषु मथो द ष्ट्वा ब्राह्मणं क्षत्रबन्घुवत्।
यो हन्यात्समरे क्रुद्धो युद्ध्यन्तमपलायिनम।।
ब्रह्महत्या न तस्य स्यादिति धर्मेषु निश्चयः।
क्षत्रियाणं स्थितो धर्मे क्षत्रियो स्मि तपोधन।।

The Sānti Parva (22.5–6) also indirectly sanctions the killing of a Brāhmaṇa who follows the *dharma* of a Kshatriya.

Manu's (200 BC–AD 100) social ideas are quite flexible. That is why we find sometimes contradictory statements. Manu's social world is definitely not a rigid order.[24] Caste-privileges definitely play a significant role in the administration of justice and the application of civil and criminal law but the sense of equity is an equally significant factor in his socio-juristic world. Manu's stand on the question of self-defence versus Brāhmaṇic immunity from corporal or capital punishment reflects this point of view. He prohibits the killing of a Brāhmaṇa teacher,[25] etc., but he permits the killing of an *ātatāyin* whether he be a teacher, a child or an old man or a learned Brāmaṇa. In killing an *ātatāyī*, the killer incurs no sin whether he kills him in the presence of people or alone. In such a case, wrath meets wrath according to the *Manusmṛti* (VIII. 348–51):

शस्त्रं द्विजातिर्भिग्राह्यम्मों यत्रेपरूध्ययते
द्विजातिनान्श्च वर्णनां विप्ले कालकारिते।
आत्मनश्च परित्राणे दक्षिण च सङ्गरे।
स्त्रीविप्राभ्युपत्तीच घ्नन् धर्मेण च दुष्यति।
गुरूं व बालव द्धो वा ब्राह्मणं वा बहुश्रुतम्।
आततायिनमायान्तं हन्यादेवाविचारयन्।

These verses have been interpreted differently by the later commentators and twisted in such a manner that they are taken to indicate that an *ātatāyī* Brāhmaṇa is not to be killed—an interpretation which Manu probably never intended to convey. In a very emphatic tone Manu permits the killing of an *ātatāyin* and he does not believe in giving any privilege or relaxation to anybody whether he is a learned Brāhmaṇa or a teacher or a child or an old man in this case. It is quite natural for Manu because he believed that character and conduct are the most important elements in the determination of caste. Here birth is not sufficient. Another of his convictions was that justice is the basis of society and the state. Where justice is denied, the state or society is bound to perish.[26] In view of his social philosophy and the direct import of the verses quoted above, it is suggested that Manu permitted the killing of an *ātatāyī* Brāhmaṇa on the plea of self-defence, and equity and natural justice. The *Viṣnu Dharmaśāstra* (V, 189–90; A.D. 100 A.D. 300) the *Matsya Purāṇa* (fifth century AD, 227, 115-117) and the *Vṛddha-hārita* (IX. 349–50) follows Manu in this respect. The contention of Pargiter[27] that this term was dropped and went out of use and that is why it is not found in the *Yājñvalkya Smṛti* and later, is not based on facts as will be clear from the following discussion.

The counter-reformation (Brahminical) in the Gupta age resulted into the intensification of caste-hierarchy and privileges. The Brāhmaṇas came to be regarded as the gods on earth. The law-givers propagated the theory of complete immunity of Brāhmaṇas from corporal and capital punishment. Even in the case of serious crimes and offences only 'banishment with a right to take their full property with them' was the rule in the case of the Brāhmaṇas.[28] It is quite natural that in this changed world of social rigidity and Brāhmaṇic ascendancy, the rational views of the earlier *Smṛtikāras* regarding an *ātatāyī* Brāhmaṇa were modified and twisted in such a way as to conform with the changed social philosophy. Such change is well reflected in Kātyāyana, Sumantu, Bṛhaspati, Yājñvalkya and commentators and digest-writers. Bṛhaspati (AD 300-500) as quoted by the *Smṛticandikā* (p. 315) says that he would not kill a Brāhmaṇa *ātatāyin* deserving to be killed for his violence towards others. Thus, he would obtain the merit of an *Aśvamedha* sacrifice by not killing:

आततयिनमुत्क ष्टं व तस्वाध्यायसंयुतम।
यो न हन्याद्वाधप्राप्तं से श्वमेघफलं लभेत।

From the above reference it is clear that Bṛhaspati does not disallow the killing of a learned Brāhmaṇa *ātatāyin* but prefers the course of not killing and for this he tempts the person to take this option so as, in his opinion, it will give the merit equal to that of performing an *Aśvamedha* sacrific. In view of the fact the Bṛhaspati provides for the punishment of a Brāhmaṇa offender (as cited by the *Vivādaratnakara)*, it is suggested that he had no intention of disallowing the killing of an *ātatāyī* Brāhmaṇa.

Kātyāyana (AD 400–600) who appears to be later than Bṛhaspati[29] come forward with the changed view (as quoted in the *Smṛti Candrikā,* Vyavahāra, p. 335) that one should not kill a Brāhmaṇa, who is eminent by reason of his *tapas,* vedic study and birth even though he be an *ātatāyin*. Bhṛgu (आततायिनि चोत्क प्टे तपः स्वाध्याजन्मतः वधस्तत तु नैव स्वात्पापे हीने वधो भ गः) also excludes a Brāhmaṇa *ātatāyin* from being killed as he allows the killing of an *ātatāyin* when the offender is of a lower caste other than that of a Brāhmaṇa. It is interesting to compare the statements of Manu and Kātyāyana regarding the *ātatāyin* Brāhmaṇa. In the mind of Manu, the *ātatāyin* aspect of the offender is uppermost and the caste-aspect is subordinate while Kātyāyana emphasizes the caste privileges and the crime aspect is subservient to that philosophy. This is perfectly in keeping with the socio-juristic philosophies of the respective ages of Manu and Kātyāyana. Sumantu as quoted by *Vijnāneśvara* on *Yājnavalkya Smriti*, II. 22 and Aparārka (p. 1043) forbids the slaying of an *ātatāyī* Brāhmaṇa:

नाततायिबधे दोषो न्यत्र गोब्रह्यणात्

The *Padma Purāṇa* (V, 45, 54-6) finds no sin in killing a Brāhmaṇa, who is an *ātatāyī* and who smites one, the smiter is not tainted with the sins of that man murder. If one should desire to smite one at close quarters in a fight one does not become a Brāhmaṇa-slayer thereby.

Viśvarūpa (AD 800–850) follows the tradition of the *Dharmasūtras* and early *Smṛtis* in allowing a Brāhmaṇa *ātatāyin* to be killed. He states the following exceptions to the Brāhmaṇa-murderer (Viśvarūpa on *Yajna*. S. III. 222): one who kills a Brāhmaṇa in the battle, one who kills a Brāhmaṇa on his own account without being employed by another, one who brings about the death of such a Brāhmaṇa by hiring another at the instigation of another for the sake of money (in the last case, it is the instigator who is guilty):

> आततायिसंग्रामव्यतिरेकेण वो ब्राह्मण मन्येनाप्रयुक्तः
> स्वातन्त्रयेण हन्याद्, अन्यं वा द्रव्यदानादिना वशीक त्य
> घतयति स प्रत्येत ब्या यस्तु धनक्रीः परप्रयुक्तो
> हन्यात् तस्य स्वामिगामित्वातिक्रियाफलानाम त्विजामिव
> ब्रह्महत्याजन्यफलसम्बधा नास्त्येव।

However, Viśvarūpa on *Yājna* S. III. 221 attributes this ancient law to the *Arthaśāstra* and holds that it should yield to the rule of *Dharmaśāstra*.

Medhātithi (AD 900) appears to have held the view that there is really a prohibition against killing an *ātatāyin* Brāhmaṇa (*Manu smṛti,* VIII, 359–351). In the case of non-Brāhmaṇa *ātatāyin* he preaches the philosophy of 'wrath meets wrath'. Medhātithi, who is famous for his dynamic and progressive outlook on social questions, shows his conservatism on this particular issue. This conservatism and the apparently retrograde outlook of Medhātithi may be taken as heralding a change in the fundamental values of the social order, which reaches its climax in the eleventh-twelfth centuries and onwards. The presence of a foreign culture and religion at this time forced the Hindu *śāstrakāras* to take a hard line of conservatism. The fluid and the flexible nature of caste was no more safe and desirable. As pointed out by K.M. Munshi,[30] 'in this age the fundamental values of *Dharmaśāstra* were readjusted not only to restore continuity and stability to the social order, but to provide defensive ramparts in order to present a solid front to an aggressive alien culture and religion. The dynamic outlook of Medhātithi and *Devala Smṛti,* therefore, gave place to conservative outlook'. In this changed atmosphere it was natural for the law-givers to declare the absolute inviolability of the Brāhmaṇa, who even when he is an *ātatāyin* has been declared inviolable by all *śāstrakāras* from his period onwards. Vijñānešvara (AD 1070–1100) in his *Mitàkṣarà* on *Yājnavalkya* II. 21 says that the real intention of Manu VIII. 350-351 is not to ordain that a Brāhmaṇa must be killed if he is an *ātatāyin.* But, these two verses are surely laudatory or recommendatory dicta, *arthavāda,* the real meaning being that even a teacher and a Brāhmaṇa who are not to be killed at all may have to be killed, if they are *ātatāyins* (then what of others?). In simple words it can be said Manu's intention was to emphasize the obligation to kill an ordinary *ātatāyin* other than a Brāhmaṇa. This interpretation is quite far-fetched and has nothing to do with Manu's intention. On the other hand, the interpretation reflects the situation in the age of Vijnānešvara in respect of an *ātatāyī Brāhmaṇa.* This interpretation serves to strengthen the authors own position, which does not allow the intentional killing of an *ātatāyin Brāhmaṇa.* In his opinion if a Brāhmaṇa who is an *ātatāyin* is being opposed in self-defence without any desire to kill him and if he dies through mistake or inattention then the latter incurs no punishment at the hand of the king and has to undergo a slight *Prāyaścitta (Mità.* on II. 21.) Thus Vijnānešvara ordains that there is really a prohibition in killing an *ātatāyin* Brāhmaṇa:

> नाततायिबधे दोषेहन्तुर्भवति कश्चनेत्येतदपि
> ब्राह्मणादिव्यतिरिक्तविषयमेन।
> अतश्च ब्राह्मणादय आततायिनश्च
> आत्मदित्राणार्थहिंसानभिसंघिनां
> निवार्यमाणः प्रमादाद्यदि विपद्येरंस्तत्र लघु
> प्रायश्चितं राजदण्डभावश्चेति निश्चयः।

Aparārka (AD 1125) (on *Yaj.S.* III. 227, p. 1143) has emphasized the time-factor in the definition of an *ātatāyin* and his punishment. This is applicable in the case of *ātatāyin* Brāhmaṇa also. He says that where an *ātatāyin* Brāhmaṇa cannot be prevented from wicked intent except by killing him, there only the *sāstrās* permit the killing of a Brāhmaṇa, but where it is possible to ward him off by a mere blow it is not desirable and it would be a sin if he were killed:

> तद् व्यापारनिवारणं च यत्र बधमन्तरेण न स्भवति
> तदैव तद्त धानुज्ञा।
> यत्र तु दण्डशस्त्रादिप्रहारमात्रे णैव शक्यो
> निवारपितुं तव तु वद्वधे दोषनिमित्तमेव।

Thus Aparārka enunciates the principle that a Brāhmaṇa *ātatāyin* is to be killed in self-defence by the attacked only when it is absolutely essential for the sake of protecting one's life and other milder methods to save it fail.

This line of thought is taken up by Kulluka (AD 1150–1300) in his commentary on the *Manu smṛti.* He interprets Manu (VIII. 350–351) to mean that a *guru,* or a Brāhmaṇa or others who approach as *ātatāyins* may be killed when it is impossible to save oneself even by fleeing from them (पलायनादिभिरपिस्वनिस्तरणशक्तौ).

When the doctrine of killing a Brāmaṇa *ātatāyin* in self-defence came to be limited it was enjoined that the state should punish the *ātatāyins* but in the case of a Brāhmaṇa, the king was also limited as is clear from the *Liṅga Purāṇa,* II. 50.10. As regards an *ātatāyin,* very good kings should inflict punishment but not on Brāhmaṇas nor yet on a noble of their own realm.

The position of *Smṛiticandrikā* of *Devaṇabhaṭṭa* (AD 1200–1225) appears to be quite inconsistent in itself. At one place (I. 30) it includes the killing of a Brāhmaṇa *ātatāyī* in righteous fight in the list of forbidden acts in the Kali age, elsewhere it allows an *ātatāyin* Brāhmaṇa to be killed with impunity in self-defence (III. 26–32). Kane[31] summarizes the position of a Brāhmaṇa *ātatāyī* as follows: An *ātatāyin* Brāhmaṇa may be killed by the person attacked for which there is no sin, no punishment nor penance for it, a Brāhmaṇa *ātatāyi* (who does not come to kill) who only seizes one's field or wife should not be killed but lesser harm may be done to him with impunity, while non-Brāhmaṇa *ātatāyī* may be killed outright. Thus the *Smṛiticandrikā* bases its theory of punishment meted to an *ātatāyī* Brāhmaṇa on the grounds of intention. Hence there is apparent inconsistency. If the intention of an *ātatāyin* Brāhmaṇa is to kill, then he may be killed, if the intention is only to take away property or wife, the killing is not permissible. U.N. Ghoshal[32] has suggested, "On the vexed question of immunity of a Brāhmaṇa desperado (*ātatāyī*), our authors seek to reconcile two fundamental Smṛiti principles, namely, those of the Brāhmaṇa's complete exemption from the death penalty and the individual's right of defence". The above review of the *smṛti* and *nibandha*-works of the period shows that outwardly and superficially, attempts of reconciliation between these two principles may have been done sometime and those too very sparingly while the real intention of these law-givers was to prohibit the killing of even a desperado Brāhmaṇa. This attitude becomes an established rule in medieval India when the Muslim rule supplanted the Hindu rule. The presence of two diametrically opposite social communities with completey different religious and cultural heritages was responsible for such a conservative metamorphosis of the Hindu social ideals and values. Let us review the position of a few standard digest-writers of medieval times on this question in order to substantiate the thesis propounded above.

Sarvajña-nārāyana interprets Manu (VIII, 350) in different way and says that the blow in self-defence must not be excessive and it was not to be given where the assilant was a Brāhmaṇa:

आततायिनं हननप्रव त्तं अंगछेदापि
रूपघातेन न त्वत्यन्तन्यत्रगोब्राह्मणत्

The *Vyāvahāramayukha* of Bhaṭṭa Nilakaṇṭha (AD 1610–1650, pp. 241–43) prohibits the killing of a Brāhmaṇa *ātatāyin* even bent upon killing:

अतः कलौ स्वबधोद्यतोप्याततायी विप्रो न बध्यः
युगान्तरे तु बध्य एव।
किं च आततातविद्विजागद्याणिां धर्मयुद्धेन हिंसनम्।
इति कलौ बधोद्यातस्याततायिनो विप्रस्य हननं निषिद्धम्।

The *Viramitrodaya* (AD 1610–1640) has a long discussion on this question, which is quite interesting and suggestive. It shows as to how the Brāhmaṇa's immunity from corporal and capital punishment went on increasing and reached a climax in this age. It says (p. 399),

> ब्राह्मणस्य तु महत्वपराध्य शारीरदण्डाभावनाह स एवं
> बध्याहते ब्रह्मणस्य न बधे ब्राह्मणोर्हतीति यमा पि।
> न शारीरो ब्राह्मणसय दण्डो भवति कस्यचिदिति।

The *Vivāda Cintāmaṇi* of Vacaspati Misra[33] (last quarter of the fifteenth century), has no specific reference to an *ātatāyi* Brāhmaṇa but deals with *Sahasa.* It appears that the immunity of the Brāhmaṇa from capital punishment has come to be established without question. That is why in cases of crimes where the punishment of death is prescribed, the Brāhmaṇa is exempted and is allowed to give some fine only. It quotes Narada, Yama, Yājnavalkya, etc. to show that even in the case of murder a Brāhmaṇa is immune from the death penalty (p. 147). It is said that if a Brāhmaṇa kills a Kshatriya, he shall pay a fine of 100 *svarṇas* (p. 146). Similarly (p. 143), he interprets a passage of Yājnavalkya as follows: That is, when a Brāhmaṇa has committed a crime for which the penalty is death, he should (instead), be fined with a hundred Svarnas.

The *Kṛityakalpataru* (p. 79) (AD 1100–1150) also states in unequivocal terms, the complete immunity of the Brāhmaṇas.[34] In view of this it is not expected that it will permit the killing of a Brāhmaṇa even if he is an *ātatāyī.*

The above survey extending from the earliest times to quite modern times throws interesting light on the socio-juristic position of an *ātatāyi* Brāhmaṇa vis-á-vis, the right of self-defence and the Brāhmaṇic privilege of immunity from the capital and corporal punishment.[35] It shows as to how the import of an *ātatāyī* widened in due course from a murderer to any criminal of heinous nature. Further it demonstrates as to how the patrons of the Brāhmaṇas went on solidifying the position of the Brāhmaṇas and the basis of conduct and behaviour for the punishment, as was valid in the earlier Smṛti times, was given up in favour of caste-privileges. The rationale for such change may be found in the presence of a foreign antagonistic social community, religion and culture. Actually these unethical and unjust legal tendencies, went to make the Hindu society a decadent world, full of dormant explosive material.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. It must be confessed that very little work has been done on this aspect of socio-juristic history. Whatever has been done on it is sadly confined to a few articles such as Pargiter's *Ātatāyin:* an old legal term, in *Ashutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volumes* III, pp. 37–38; P.V. Kane's *History of Dharmaśāstra,* Vol. II, pp. 148–151 and Vol. III, pp. 517–18; K.V. Rangaswami Aiyangar's *Ātatāyivadha* or the Rights of Private Defence in Dharmasastra; *C.K. Raja Commemoration Volume,* pp. 197–232 and M. Jauhari's 'A Note on Ātatāyin,' *P.I.H.C.*, XXXth Section, Bhagalpur, 1968, p. 55 and 'Summary'. Nothing specific has been attempted on an *Ātatāyī Brāhmaṇa* in particular.
2. Aiyer, S. Sivaswamy, *Evolution of Hindu Moral Ideals,* Cal., 1935, p. 92.
3. J. Jolly, *Hindu Law and Custom.*
4. Ibid., See, *E.R.E.* vol. IV "Crime and Punishment".
5. Sir H. Maine, *Early Law Custom,* p. 47.
6. See S. Varadachari, *The Hindu Judicial System,* pp. 220–228; G.S. Ghurye, *Caste, Class and Occupation,* pp. 46, 57.
7. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra,* Vol. II, pp. 148–51; Vol. III, pp. 515–18.
8. The problems of social inequality versus spiritual equality, conscience versus punishment, the natural social hierarchy versus the artificial social hierarchy in the Hindu social system have been dealt with in detail by G.H. Mess, *Dharma and Society,* London: Luzac & Co., 1935, pp. 127, 142, 153.
9. *Pargiter,* Ātatāyin: An Old Legal Term, *in Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volume,* III, pt. I, p. 37, Vaj. S., 16. 18; *kathaka S.,* 17. 12.
10. R.V., II. 33.I, 3; I, 114.7.8; S.B., IX.1.1.1.6; A.V., I.28.5. See A.A. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology,* pp. 74-77.
11. *Vaj. Sam.,* XVI. 2021.
12. The dates of *Smṛti* and digest works have been taken from J. Jolly, *Hindu Law and Custom,* and P.V. Kane's *History of Dharmaśāstra.*
13. See, N.J. Shede, Foundations of Atharvanic Religion, *BDCRI,* IX., R.C. Misra, *The Atharvaveda Mein Samskrithka Tattva* (Hindi), Allahabad, 1968.
14. Pargiter, *Ātatāyin,*. p. 38.
15. It may be pointed out that the term *ātatāyī* has a political affiliation also. Certain enemy-states are regarded as *ātatāyin* in the inter-state relationships. See M.B.H., *Asramavasika* Parva, VI, 1.5. N.N. Law, *Inter-state Relations in Ancient India* Pt. I. P. 24, M. Jauhari, *Politics and Ethics in Ancient India,* Varanasi, p. 221.

16. For the position of an ātatāyin in general in the *Dharmasastra* see, K.V. Rangaswami Aiyanger's "*Ātatāyi-vadha* or the Right of Private Defence" in *Dharmaśāstra, K.C. Raja Commemoration Volume,* pp. 197–232.
17. Kane, *History of Dharmasastra,* Vol. II, Pt. I, p. 148.
18. G.S. Ghurye, *Caste, Class and Occupation, p. 58.*
19. *The Kalivarijas,* Calcutta, 1943, p. 104.
20. *Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volume,* p. 37.
21. V.S., D.S. 16, 18, 46; Baudh, D.S., p. 248; V.M. Apte, in *The Age of Imperial Unity,* (ed) R.C. Majumdar, p. 511, *Manusmṛiti* I.103; IV. 2ff. VIII. 9: VIII. 58.
22. *Manusmṛiti,* I, 93, X. 3.
23. N.K. Dutt, *Origin and Growth of Caste in India,* Vol. I, pp. 157–59.
24. K.M. Munshi, "Foreword" in *The Age of Imperial Unity* (ed.) R.C. Majumdar, pp. XXI–XXII.
25. *Manusmṛiti,* XI. 89; K.P. Jayaswal, *Manu and Yājñavalkya* condemns Manu for "placing the Brahmin above the Law" and says that Yājñavalkya sets aside the extravagant claims of the Brāhmaṇas for total immunity. But Jayaswal's assessment of Manu in this respect is not borne out by Manu (VIII. 337–338) himself.
26. *The Age of Imperial Unity,* pp. 543, *Manusmṛiti* I. 53, x. 3; VIII. 9; MBH., Bombay Edn, III. 313. 109.
27. Op. cit., p. 140.
28. U.N. Ghoshal, *The Classical Age,* pp. 556–556, fn. 2& 3.
29. See P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmśāstra.*
30. *The Struggle For Empire,* Foreword, p. XXII.
31. P.V. Kane, op.cit., pol. II, pt. I., pp. 148–151.
32. *The Struggle for Empire (ed.)* R.C. Majumdar, p. 474.
33. Umesh Misra, 'Intr.' p. XXIV, in G.N. Jha, *Vivādacintamaṇi of Vācaspati Misra,* Baroda, 1942.
34. 'Introduction' in *Vyavaharatantra of Krtyakalpataru* (Index) by K.V. Rangaswami Aiyangar (Baroda, 1958).
35. It may be remembered that such privileges were given to priestly classes in other countries. For example, the 'benefits of clergy' in English Law gave similar rights and privileges to clergy. See, Sir W. Holdsworth, *History of the English Law,* III, pp. 293–315 but that is no excuse for exonerating Indian social and legal system from the gross injustice.

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Trends in Socio-Religious Thinking in Advaita Vedanta

Śruti (i.e. the Vedas and the *Upaniṣads*) is believed to be the basis of Hindu social and moral tradition and is undeniably so. But this tradition is inseparably connected with Hindu religion and hence *Śruti* is also the foundation of Hindu social and religious tradition which is supposed to have undergone several stages of development. The order seems to be as follows. The four Vedas are taken to be the starting point. These were followed by *Brāhmaṇas* and by *Āraṇyakas* which further developed into the *Upaniṣads*. The Vedas and the *Upaniṣads* are treated as *Śruti* as it is believed that these (at least the Vedas) were directly revealed to the sages from time to time. It is also held that all the revealed *Śruti* texts were not available at later times. Some of these are believed to have been extinct although attempts were made to retrieve them.[1] Retrievals and fresh reconstructions were also made to fill in the gaps and these are synoptically called *Smṛti* as contrasted with direct revelations. Such texts include *Kalpasūtras* comprising *Śrautasūtras, Dharmasūtras* and *Gṛhyasūtras* as well as the epics including the *Bhagavadgītā*, and *Purāṇas*, at least the older ones. Some of the newer *Purāṇas* were composed at much later times representing various stages and areas of Hindu society that interacted with other religions of the land.

In the *Śruti* texts the part that deals with the duties to be performed in religions matters is known as *karmakāṇḍa*. It is very intimately connected with what is called the ideal of *dharma* recognized as one of the important *puruṣārthas* (or ideals of life). The other part of the *Śruti* (falling within the *Upaniṣads*) is concerned with the knowledge of one's own self. It is known as *jñānakāṇḍa* and is connected with the ideal of spiritual freedom or *mokṣa* which is treated as the highest ideal of life. So far as the *karmakāṇḍa* part is concerned details regarding the duties to be performed, whether Vedic sacrifice or sacramental rite or *saṃskāra*, the qualifications for performing this presuppose that the agent of the action concerned belongs to a given station in life, that is, to a given *varna* and *āśrama*. Rules prescribed for performance are mostly unambiguous, but the presupposition is that the duties are essentially relative to the *varṇa* and *āśrama* status of the individual agent. In the case of *jñānakāṇḍa* however, the rules are not as straightforward as knowledge is not an action to be performed by the agent. Knowledge takes place when the conditions necessary for knowledge obtain and such conditions are not supposed to include features relating to one's station in life. Philosophers felt interested in the problem involved here. Thus, Jaimini, the author of the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras* and later his commentators, namely Savarasvamin, Prabhakara, Kumarila and others discuss whether the right of *svarga*-(heavens)-enabling sacrifices like *agniṣṭoma* is open to all in the Hindu society in connection with the interpretation of the section called *Apaśūdra-adhikaraṇa* of the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras*. The verdict given is that the sacrifice is open only to those in whose house fire enkindled through permissible Vedic acts is in constant flame. But such a fire can be enkindled by a *dvija* or twice-born (one birth being the physical one of *dvija* parents and the other being the act of initiation or *upanayana*).

What might be the verdict of the author and commentators of the *Vedāntasūtras*, particularly of Śankaracarya who is the founder of the Advaita Vedanta school of Indian philosophy? Śankara is believed to be an original thinker who founded a new school of thought though he had to work under the limitations of writing his major works as commentaries on works by others. It is true that he authored many works other than commentaries. But these are small and minor works from the point of view of philosophy. These are philosophically unimportant works meant for general readers. His major philosophical works are only his commentaries on the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Vedāntasūtras*. His views on the problem we are discussing are found in a systematic manner at several places of his commentary on the *Vedāntasūtras*. The context most relevant to the purpose of ascertaining Śankara's view on this is to be found in his commentary on the *Vedāntasūtras* 1/3/34-38 falling under the section '*Apa-śūdra-adhikaraṇa*'. Like Jaimini who denied to the *śūdras* the right to perform *agniṣṭoma* and similar sacrifices, Badarayana also denied that the *śūdras* are entitled to the study of Brahman and knowledge of identity between the Brahman and the individual that can lead to the achievement of the ideal of *mokṣa* or freedom. What is striking is that the name of the section in the *Vedāntasūtras* where the problem has been discussed is the same as in the *Mīmāmṣāsūtras*, namely, '*Apa-śūdra-adhikaraṇa*'.[2] Since Śankara is a commentator of the *Vedāntasūtras*, he explains the contention of the *sūtras* only faithfully. While doing this he not only adduces *Śruti*-related arguments but also cites passages from *Smṛti* texts like *Manusaṃhitā* and *Gautamasaṃhitā* particularly in his comments on the last *sūtra* of the *Adhikaraṇa*. This faithfulness gives an appearance that his views are no different from what is presented by way of explanation. But it seems to us that towards the end of his comments in this section Śankara has modestly expressed an opinion that amounts to the concession that though the *śūdras* cannot obtain the desired knowledge of identity through the study of the *Upaniṣads* they can do it through the study (*śravaṇa*) of *Purāṇa* and *Itihāsa*.[3] It seems to us that it was a significant concession inasmuch as other religious leaders were not willing to allow this redeeming possibility being fully conscious that denying such a possibility implies that the *śūdras* will then be incapable of attaining to the ideal of *mokṣa*.

It is however not clear to us whether the liberal attitude shown by Śankara was a part of his general strategy or just a sporadic one. We assume that according to him the institution of renunciation or *sanyāsa* is necessary for gaining the knowledge of identity. But there is no categorical statement on his part regarding whether the *śūdras* are eligible for this, more about which is later discussed.

We may here try to understand why Śankara and his followers insist that knowledge of the true nature of self and its identity with Brahman, ideally speaking, can be obtained only through the study of the *Upaniṣads* and by guidance from a knowledgeable expert. So far as the nature of the self is concerned, Śankara in his commentary on *B.S.* 1/1/1 enumerates several views each of which are distinct from one another and hence cannot all be correct. And so far as the nature of Brahman is concerned, he argues that it is not open to empirical observation as it has no sensible properties like colour, smell, etc. and for this reason we cannot also have inferential knowledge here as the generalization on the basis of which inference is to take place depends on empirical observation itself. Nor is it possible to have knowledge of Brahman by *tarka* or purely ratiocinative means as it is likely to generate a plethora of views developed by different people with diverse subjective capabilities.[4] Śankara thus holds that for unwavering knowledge of Brahman we shall have to depend on *śravaṇa* of *Śruti* passages made accessible by competent experts and clarified through *manana* or ratiocination leading to realization through contemplation or *nididhyāsana*. The process thus begins with *śravaṇa* of sentences uttered by gurus or experts and therefore the resultant knowledge is knowledge by testimony. Testimony involved here is the recorded report of seers enshrined in what are called *mahāvākyas* and imparted by a person who himself has realized the truth of what is being imparted. The process described here explains why knowledge of identity between one's self and Brahman that is supposed to be adequate for *mokṣa* must be in the Vedantic way. Therefore, those who are not eligible for the study of Vedanta and also not eligible for *śravana* of *mahāvākyas* about the nature of self and its identity with Brahman cannot obtain the knowledge of identity in the Vedantic way. Hence, thus goes the argument in the *Apa-śūdra-adhikaraṇa* of the *Vedāntasūtras*, the *śūdras* who are debarred from the study of Vedanta cannot obtain the kind of identity considered necessary for liberation in the Vedantic way.

It is well known that Śankara does not admit plurality of the soul. The implication then is that *varṇa* distinctions which cannot be in the realm of the soul may at best pertain to differences in the physical bodies with which an individual is born. But metaphysically speaking, according to Śankara the world is not real and hence the differences in the physical bodies which are part of the world cannot be real. Thus, the right of entitlement to the Vedantic study and to knowledge of identity in the Vedantic way does not seem to be of any significant privilege and its denial any loss in the true sense. In the empirical plane those who are granted the privilege may take this to be a gain and who are denied the privilege may take themselves as deprived. It seems to me however that Śankara does not identify himself with any of the groups. Nor does he argue for according the right to all or for abolishing it for everyone. Had he argued for that it would have been equivalent to accepting the reality of the distinctions, which he cannot do within the limits of his philosophy and metaphysics. Without challenging the system in practice which he did not introduce he accorded the right of knowledge of identity to the *śūdras* through some other means. Towards the end of his commentary on the last *sūtra* of the *Apa-śūdra-adhikarana* he points out that the *śūdras* can achieve the desired knowledge of identity from popular religious texts like what are known as *Purāṇa* and *Itihāsa.* Not that Śankara was recommending that *śūdras* be entitled to such studies as this is already recognized.[5]

His originality lies in emphasizing it and holding that this meagre exposure also can generate knowledge of identity which was not perhaps granted by other religious leaders.

According to Śankara, it is true, the prerequisites for Vedantic studies is that the person be initiated (*upanīta*) and thus becomes capable of understanding the intricacies of Upanisadic texts because of his educational grooming in the stage called *brahmacarya-āśrama* in the person's life. This restrictive educational system was actually prevalent in the society at that time and there was then no system of reservation. It was thus understood that those who did not have the required educational privilege were not capable of learning the identity through the study of Vedantic, that is, Upanisadic texts. But even for the privileged persons, i.e. the *dvijas* this is only a necessary step in the process of acquiring *mokṣa* and does not thereby ensure that it will automatically follow or follow more quickly in comparison to other ways of picking up information about identity through popular discourses on the basis of *Purāṇa* and *Itihāsa*. What in addition to this and other such factors is required to enable the person to gain liberation-generating knowledge of identity between oneself and Brahman?

In addition to regular recitation of the portion of the Vedas allotted to an initiated person called *sva-adhyaya*, ascetic qualities (like *śama, dama,* etc.), an attitude of renunciation (*vairagya*) towards the rewards his performance of duties can bring forward as well as *mumukṣatva* or an intense desire for achieving freedom from sufferings, are also necessary prerequisites for undertaking an enquiry into the nature of *ātman* and Brahman. The model of such an enquiry is enshrined in what has been captured in the *Vedāntasūtras* by Badarayana. The *Vedāntasūtras* capture his understanding of the gist of the Upanisadic teachings. Philosophers of different religious traditions unquestioningly accept this, as testified by the fact that many great saints and philosophers of different schools wrote commentaries on the *Vedāntasūtras* of Badarayana. His work seems to be later than that of Jaimini as we find references to Jaimini's views in it although it is generally believed that the *śūtra* works are more or less cotemporaneous with one another. Like other *śūtras* within the *āstika* tradition, the *Vedāntasūtras* emphasize the ideal of *mokṣa*. But unlike many of them, the *Vedāntasūtras* lay more stress on testimony; reason may at best work as auxiliary to testimony. The person who wants to achieve *Mokṣa* in the Vedantic way must go for a consistent interpretation of the *Upaniṣads* in support of the Vedantic teaching about Brahman's being the cause of creation. Another important Vedantic teaching is that the individual's self is identical in essence with Brahman. Such a teaching, Śankara holds, is found in Upanisadic sayings or *mahāvākyas* like "*Tat tvam asi*", "*Prajñānam Brahma*", "*Ayam ātma Brahma*" and "*Aham Brahma asmi*", the *mahāvākyas*, as we shall see, have been allotted by Śankara as the motto respectively, of *Dvarakā Math, Purī Math, Jyoti Math and Sṛngerī Math*, the four different ascetic centres established by Śankaracarya himself.

It is normally believed, as we have seen, that a seeker must pass through three different processes as evidenced by the *Śruti* passage "*Śrotavyo mantavyo nididhāsitavyaḥ*" (Truth has to be first registered through testimony, then supported on the basis of ratiocination and finally realized through meditation). It seems to us that after undergoing educational training during the stage of celibacy (*brahmacarya*) the individual may become a householder and then can opt for forest life. His final stage will be that of *sanyāsa* or renunciation. These are called stages/stations or *āśramas* in the life of a twice-born or *dvija*, assuming that the first stage begins with initiation or *upanayana* which is not open to the *śūdras*. But the contexts in which such great sayings of the *Upaniṣads* are mentioned do not describe these stages of life. And it will be too much of imaginative conjecture to hold that the system of four stages is presupposed here. It cannot be denied that the first stage is necessary as without education in the Vedic tradition no one can understand the import of the *Upaniṣads*. But the life of the householder does not seem to be a natural stage for grasping Upanisadic teaching. On the other hand, this stage seems to be rather inconsistent with that, though such a stage may be quite congruous with the system of Vedic rites and rituals. Since the stage of forest life necessarily presupposes that it be preceded by the life of the householder, this also does not fit well with the liberation-generating Vedantic knowledge though it need not be regarded as antagonistic to it. Therefore, ideally speaking, the dawn of Vedantic knowledge is possible, it may be argued, only in the stage of renunciation or *sanyāsa*. But philosophers are not all enthusiastic in admitting this fourth stage (*cathurtha-āśrama*). In fact, as we hinted at earlier, Badarayana and Śankara mention the name of Jaimini, the author of the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras* as the one who challenges the claim that the institution of renunciation is based on Vedic testimony.[6]

Śankara however concedes that there is no direct Vedic/Upanisadic injunction/statement in support of the institution of *sanyāsa*. It is based mostly on *Smṛti* texts and supporting customs and practices.[7] We may therefore make a guess that it is primarily a recommendation made by Badarayana and Śankara that the seeker of Vedantic truth must become a *sanyāsin* to obtain success in his spiritual mission. According to Jaimini and his followers, the Vedas including the *Upaniṣads* are treated as a source of knowledge only in respect of our duties and prohibitions. Anything that altogether lacks reference to prescribed duties is not what the Vedas can speak of. In the words of Savarasvamin (the commentator of the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras*): *"Amnāyasya kriyārthatvād ānarthakyam atadarthānam"* quoted by Śankara in his *Bhāṣya* on *Tattu samanvayāt, B.S.* 1/1/4. The contention that knowledge of Brahman is attainable independently of the context of any duty to be performed is not thus acceptable to them. The *sanyāsin* who by definition is one who has formally disowned his *varna* affiliations, it is thus argued, is not competent and qualified for performing any prescribed duty. Therefore, Upanisadic knowledge, conceived as not connected with any prescribed duty, that a *sanyāsin* seeks to obtain is not possible.

Śankara, however, differs and holds that such knowledge is certainly possible and ideally speaking, this can be obtained only by a *sanyāsin*. The institution of *sanyāsa*, he thus contends, is a necessity. *Sanyāsa* or renunciation is the fourth stage in a person's life if he is required to pass through the other three stages, namely, that of celibacy and of the householder and also the stage of forest life. The person may skip the third stage and may go to the final stage from the stage of the householder.[8] But a person may skip the intermediate stages altogether and proceed directly from the stage of celibacy to the stage of renunciation. Śankara quotes *Jabalopanisad* in support of this.[10]

It is believed that Śankara wrote a short treatise called *Maṭha-āmnāya* which is divided into five sections, the first four dealing with rules of the four ascetic centres or *maṭhas* and the fifth '*Maṭha-anuśāsanam*' dealing with general rules. The names of the first four sections are '*Sāradāmaṭha-āmnāya*', '*Govardhanamaṭha-āmnāya*', '*Jyotirmaṭha-āmnāya*' and '*Śṛngerimaṭha-āmnāya*'. The four great sayings that we have enlisted above have been allotted to four ascetic centres whose designations occur in the names of the four sections mentioned just now. The salient features of the centres are as follows.

1. SARADAMATHA IN THE WEST

(a)	Titles of the *Sannyāsins*	*Tirtha/Āśrama*
(b)	Name of the place of the centre	Dvāraka
(c)	Name of the *Deva/Devī*	*Siddhesvara/ Bhadrakālī*
(d)	First *Ācārya*	Viśvarūpa (i.e. Sureṣvara)
(e)	Title of the *Brahmacārins*	*Svarūpa*
(f)	Vedas specified and Gotra	*Samaveda/Avigata*
(g)	*Mahāvākya* allotted	*'Tat tvam asi'*
(h)	Name of the Community	*Kiṭavāra*

2. GOVARDHANAMATHA IN THE EAST

(a)	Titles of the *Sanyāsins*	*Vana/Araṇya*
(b)	Name of the place of the centre	Purī
(c)	Name of the *Deva/Devī*	*Jagannātha/Vimalā*
(d)	First *Ācārya*	Padmapāda
(e)	Title of the *Brahmacārins*	*Prakāśa*
(f)	*Mahāvākya* allotted	*'Prajñānam Brahma'*
(g)	Vedas specified and *Gotra*	*Ṛgveda/Kāśyapa*
(h)	Name of the Community	*Bhogavāra*

3. JYOTIRMATHA (SRIMATHA) IN THE NORTH

(a)	Titles of the *Sanyāsins*	*Giri/Parvata/Sāgara*
(b)	Name of the place of the centre	Badarikāśrama
(c)	Name of the *Deva/Devī*	*Nārāyaṇa/Pūrṇāgirī*
(d)	First *Ācārya*	*Toṭakācārya*
(e)	Title of the *Brahmacārins*	*Ānanda*
(f)	*Mahāvākya* allotted	*'Ayam ātma Brahma'*
(g)	Vedas specified and *Gotra*	*Atharvaveda/Bhṛgu*
(h)	Name of the Community	*Ānandavāra*

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4. SṚNGERIMATHA IN THE SOUTH

(a)	Titles of the *Sanyāsins*	*Sarasvatī/Bhāratī/ Purī*
(b)	Name of the place of the centre	Rāmeśvaram
(c)	Name of the *Deva/Devī*	*Ādivarāha/Kamākṣī*
(d)	*First Ācārya*	Pṛthvīdhara
(e)	Title of the *Brahmacārins*	*Caitanya*
(f)	*Mahāvākya* allotted	*'Aham Brahma asmi'*
(g)	Vedas allotted and *Gotra*	*Yajurveda/Bhūrbhūva*
(h)	Name of the Community	*Bhūrivāra*

If we closely look at the points noted by us from the work *Maṭhāmnāya* we can notice certain features of the institution of *sanyāsa* introduced by Sankara. Rows 1–4 (a) enumerate ten (*dasā*) titles and the system introduced herein is thus known as *Daśanāmisampradāya.* Not that such titles were not prevalent before the time of Śankara. Quite a few of them were perhaps known in the popular *Śaiva* tradition.[10] In the *Śaiva* tradition these *sanyāsins* unlike in the Śankarite tradition were not necessarily *dvijas.* In the Śankarite tradition, some one or other of the *mahāvākyas* is the motto of the respective school [See Rows 1–4 (f)] and again some Veda or the other is specified for it [See Rows 1–4 (g)]. This proves beyond doubt that in Śankara's system a *sanyāsin* has to be a *dvija.* Thus, a *śūdra* is debarred from becoming such a *sanyāsin.* Like the restriction imposed in *Apa-śūdra-adhikaraṇa* on the *śūdras* in respect of undertaking Vedantic study as noted by us earlier here also we find that they have been similarly excluded. In his commentary on that section Śankara has made a redeeming gesture that though the *śūdras* are not entitled to knowledge of the Brahman through the study of Vedanta they can attain to it through the studies of *Purāṇa* and *Itihāsa.* However for the methodology of attaining to the desired knowledge Śankara has made it clear that the institution of *sanyāsa* is necessary in the Vedantic fold. But because of restrictions imposed on the *śūdras* as just noted by us this cannot be extended to them. Hence the concession made in the *Apa-śūdra-adhikaraṇa* seems to be vacuous as Śankara does not specify how they can actually attain to the liberation-producing knowledge. We may however be allowed to make a few observations here on the institution of *sanyāsa* proposed by Śankara and shall end up with some answers to the problem noted by us here.

It is believed that at the time of initiation for *sanyāsa* through what is called *virajāhoma* the person is given the *mahāvākya* of the centre he has opted for.[11] Thus the preceptor in the *Sāradāmatha*, we suppose, will recite, in the ears of the disciple, the Upanisadic saying *'Tat tvam asi'* ('That thou art'). This is an informative identity statement which is believed to be true. Apparently however, the statement cannot be true if the words of the sentence *'Tat'* and *'tvam'* are understood in their connotations; the first word *'Tat'* stands for the creator and connotes his property, say, the property of omniscience and the other word *'tvam'* stands for the suffering individual or *jīva* and signifies the limited character of his knowledge. It is necessary to concede that nobody can take to be true the proposition that the omniscient is the same as the one who is not so. But if the statement under reference is true and intended to be taken so, the words are to be understood only in their reference or denotation and not as entities possessing contrary qualities of omniscience and ignorance. The disciple who has received his initiation through such a sentence must inculcate the spirit of what is known as *nirguṇopāsanā/nirākāropāsanā*. If the word '*upāsanā*' is to be understood as worship of a deity superior to and distinct from the worshipper, then we should rather use the word '*sādhanā*' instead.

What is noteworthy here is that Śankara is arguing here for a very difficult form of *sādhanā* for Vedantic knowledge by following the teachings of the *Upaniṣads*. If he would have written an independent work from the point of view of his monistic philosophy, we suppose, he would not have made any restrictive recommendation in respect of eligibility of the devotees who can go for such a form of *sādhanā*. But as he had to project his innovative ideas within the limits of commentaries on works where restrictive practices were accepted we should not attribute to Śankara the authorship of such restrictive practices. If we do that we shall be arguing within the circle of our own questions and perspectives and thereby shall lose sight of the innovations Śankara was interested in.

In recent times however a movement arose in Bengal known as Brahmasamaj movement which supported the idea of *nirākāropāsanā* and argued for and practiced *Brahmopāsanā* in the Upanisadic model in sittings of its samaj or society where caste/varna distinctions were presumably unimportant. We are not sure whether that movement succeeded or not.

We may also ponder here whether Śankara's project of *nirākāropāsanā* succeeded or not. There is no denying the fact that we the Hindus are now more used to worshipping our deity through some form, be that a mere linguistic symbol or an image as depicted in a verse or as reflected in an imagined figure placed in a shrine. Śankara himself was not above this as is evident from his *stotras.* Even in *Maṭhāmnāya*, Śankara allotted one *deva* and oṇe *devī* to each of the four *maṭhas* he established [see Rows 1–4 (c) wherein he specified the names of *Siddheśvara-Bhadrakālī, Jagannātha-Vimalā, Nārāyaṇa-Pūrṇāgirī* and *Ādivarāha-Kamākṣī*]. It is unthinkable for a Hindu to keep a *deva/devī* in a temple without the provision for performing regularly the appropriate form of *pūjā*. And it is all the more unthinkable that Śankara (whom we all know to be a great devotee from his verses) would advise the housing of *devas* and *devīs* in the centres without also prescribing that they be worshipped. It is therefore clear that he was not against the form of *sādhanā* known as *sākāropāsanā*, though it is not clear to us how the worship of the *deva/devī* allotted to a centre would be relevant for the *nirākāropāsanā* to be performed there with the help of the *mahāvākya* assigned to it. It is sometimes held that the two forms of *upāsanā* under reference are stages in the aspirant's spiritual mission. But from the combination of *nirākāropāsanā* and *sākāropāsanā* as suggested by Śankara here it seems to us that the aspirant could switch from one to the other both ways. If we are correct in our reading of Śankara we can say that according to him the popular form of *sādhanā* as captured in *pancopāsanā* highlighted in *Purāna* and *Itihāsa* models is not antagonistic to the Upanisadic mode of *sādhanā* through *nirākāropāsanā.* So far as the former is concerned Śankara followed the recognized models of *Śaiva* or *Vaiṣṇava* or similar such model and therefore for its success or failure Śankara is neither to be complimented nor to be blamed. But the path of *nirākāropāsanā* through the listening etc. of *mahāvākya* by the *sanyāsins,* we may guess, did not succeed that well if we are to judge by the gradual dilution of the system proposed by Śankara. One reason for the lack of success of the system might be that Śankara picked up elements of his proposed institution of *daśanāmisanyāsa* from the *Śaiva* tradition then prevalent in the society. This *Śaiva* tradition was not perhaps socially restrictive as it did not confine the system only to the *dvijas.* We shall however plead that the concession made by Śankara in the *Apa-Sūdra-adhikaraṇa* fits well with some extended version of *sanyāsa,* perhaps of the *Śaiva* tradition as we are thinking of here. We also wonder here whether or not the trainee personnel of the centres called *Brahmacārins* who were not yet inducted as full-fledged *sanyāṣins* and who used to conduct ritualistic performances in connection with the worship of the deities of the centre were themselves initiated into *tāntrika-dīkṣā* for such a purpose. Had that been the case then there was obviously coexistence of and interactions between two systems in the centres thus threatening the insularities of the new Śankarite system. With the passage of time, Śankara's system got diluted so much so that the great Advaitin of Madhusudana Sarasvati's stature allowed induction of *śūdras* into the community of *sanyāsins* thinking that this would be useful for defence purposes.[12] In recent times the *Daśanāmī* system has become so much liberal that except for a few most of the titles of the *sanyāsins* can be used by non-*dvija sanyāsins.*[13]

It is interesting to note in this context that the Brahmasamaj movement in Bengal (perhaps also similar other movements in other provinces) which arose in eighteenth/nineteenth century dispensed with the system of *sanyāsa* though there was provision for *Ācāryas* to supervise the proceedings of their religious assembly. These movements were supporters of *nirākāropāsanā* and were, in theory at least, egalitarian in their social outlook. But these movements were elitist and not popular in nature.

The Ramakrishna Mission Order, it may be noted, includes the provisions for monks or *sanyāsins* and has made the institution of *sanyāsa* open to *dvija* and non-*dvija* alike (if we understand the terms in their usual senses). They even allow that non-Hindus also can become *sanyāsins.* Thus, Swami Vivekananda himself initiated two Christian acquaintances of United States into *sanyāsa.*[14] It is also believed that Ramakrishna Mission allows *sanyāsa* even for Muslims. How to interpret such moves? Ramakrishna Mission is known to be a follower of *Purī Sampradāya* which belongs to Śankara's *Daśanāmisampradāya.* Therefore, the requirement of *sva-adhyaya* and subsequent initiation into *sanyāsa* in Śankara's model should not be flouted. Hence, the requirement of *dvijahood* should be endorsed even within the Ramakrishna Mission Order. In what sense are we to understand *dvijahood* within this order? We guess that the *dvija* is here understood not as one born of *non-śūdra* Hindu *dvija* parents but as one, we understand, who deserves to be so regarded because of personal qualities innate or acquired as sanctioned by an appropriate interpretation of *Bhagavadgītā* doctrine of *varṇa.* According to it, *varṇa* is determined by one's *guṇa* and *karma* (Verse 4/13). In whatever way we are to understand the meaning of the term *'dvija'* not enough people will qualify for the order of *sanyāsin* and it will not be granted to too many people. It does not then hold out much of a promise for the multitude of ordinary people.

We may therefore ponder here how would one, who may have received information about Brahman and one's essential identity with it through listening to *'Itihasa'* and *'Purana'* as Śankara would allow, obtain liberation-generating knowledge if the course of *nirākāropāsanā* is not open to such a person? In other words, if the path of *sanyāsa* is not permissible to the person how would he proceed towards liberation? If the route cannot be shown Śankara's concession as noted by us earlier becomes vacuous. Since we do not find any direction in his writing we are constrained to infer that he could not show any path for such people. But did the general people bother much about this? The normative point of view does not always pay. Hence, the normative prohibition, that is, denial of the right in respect of *śūdras* did not pay. They simply ignored it and opted for an alternative path available in the society. *Tāntrika dīksā,* i.e. initiation through the *tāntrika* method assures that such an initiated person can attain to liberation. The added advantage of the method is that one can attain to the ideal without going through the strenuous process of *sanyāsa.*[16] It implies that the opportunity is now available not only to the *śūdras* but also to the *dvijas* even if they are householders or *gṛhins.* The privilege was not restricted in any way as it was extended to maximum possible number of people. Śankara transcended the limitations of ritualistic *karmakāṇḍa* and showed us an achievable ideal of freedom although he could not extend the facility to all. *Tāntrika dīkṣā* promised the same for all. If we are to take lessons from history we can say that the system that is restrictive in nature cannot survive and invariably gives way to an improved system.[17]

NOTES

1. See Panini's *Sūtra* 4/2/7 on *Dṛṣṭa* and *Sūtra* 4/3/101 on *Prokta,* quoted and explained in *Bharatvarshiya Upasak Sampradaya,* Vol. I, p. 67.
2. Jaimini's *Mīmāṃsāsūtras.*
3. See my *Studies in Advaita Vedanta* pp. 27–41 and my article "Course of Hindu Religion" in *Religions of the people of India.*
4. See Śankara's Commentary on *B.S.* 1/3/38.
5. ... *caturovarṇān śrāvayet* etc. *Mahābhārata, Śāntiparvan* 327/49, quoted in Śankara's Commentary on *B.S.* (*Brahmasūtra*) 1/3/38.
6. See *B.S.* 3/4/18: *Śeṣatvāt puruṣārthavād, yathā anyeṣu iti Jaiminiracodanā ca apavadati hi.*
7. ...*Smṛtyācārabhyām tu teṣam prasiddheḥ na pratyakṣasruteḥ* in Śankara's commentary on *B.S.* 3/4/18.
8. "*Yatidharmaprakaraṇa*" in *Yājñavalkyasaṃhitā* captures the idea as *Vanād gṛhād vā kṛtyā iṣṭim etc.* See also the section "*Sanyāsāśramadharma*" (6/1–23) in *Hārītasaṃhitā.*
9. *Brahmacaryādeva pravrajet* in *Jabalopaniṣad,* quoted by Śankara in his commentary on *B.S.* 3/4/17.
10. See *Bharatvarshiya Upasak Sampradaya,* pp. 13 & 37.

11. See *Indian Sadhus*, pp. 93–94.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
13. *The Mystics, Ascetics and Saints of India*, pp. 153–4.
14. See *Indian Sadhus*, p. 234.
15. See *Bhagavadgītā* 4/13.
16. See *Kutārṇavatantra*, 14/87–9 and *Sastramulak Bharaty Saktisadhana*, pp. 690–4.
17. I delivered an address in a 'Śruti' Workshop in 2005 at the department of Philosophy, Jadavpur University. A paper was prepared in Bengali on its basis which is likely to be in a department's publication. The present paper in English is close in content to that paper. I am grateful to the Editors of *Sandhān* for agreeing to publish it.

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3. Śankara's *Maṭhāmnāya*, in *Śankaragrantharatnāvalī*, (ed.) Rajen Ghosh, Kalikata, Sakabda 1849, Bangabda 1334.
4. G.S. Ghurye, *Indian Sadhus*, Bombay Popular Prakashan, 1964.
5. *Hāritasaṃhitā*.
6. John Campbell Oman, *The Mystics, Ascetics and Saints of India*, First Published 1903, Cosmo Print, 1984.
7. Sukharanjan Saha, *Studies in Advaita Vedanta*, J.U. 2004.
8. Sukharanjan Saha ed., *Religions of the People of India*, J.U. 2003.
9. *Yājñavalkyasamhitā*.
10. *Kulārṇavatantra*. Quoted in *Sastrmulak Bharatiya Saktisadhana* (In Bengali) by Upendra Kumar Das, Vols. I&II, Visvabharati, 1984.

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Kutiyattam: The Surviving Sanskrit Theatre of Kerala

Kutiyattam, preserved down the ages as a temple art of Kerala has recently attracted a lot of international attention after being accorded recognition as one among the "Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity" by UNESCO. Sanskrit drama, a surprising discovery for the western Indologists of the nineteenth century, who did not anticipate anything like it in the ancient Indian civilization opened up new vistas of knowledge with works of masterminds like Kalidasa, Bhasa and Sudraka but remained an abstraction for want of a living theatre where it could be visualized. No doubt, discovery of texts like the encyclopedic *Natyasastra* of Bharata, presented the possibility of discovery of ancient Indian theatrical practices, but, for both researchers and theatre artists, the elaborate principles of acting enshrined in it, however brilliantly copious, had no practical corroborations and no feedback from a living Sanskrit theatre. Sanskrit enthusiasts trained in western tradition did try to fashion a theatre modeled after the western realistic theatre in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but these hybrid productions were bound to be failures since they could not do justice to the requirements of Indian classical traditions. The outside world, thus had absolutely no clue of the manner in which a Sanskrit drama was traditionally enacted. The stage for which gifted playwrights like Bhasa, Kalidasa, and Bhavabhuti wrote was to remain a mystery. It is an irony that when Indologists in India and abroad were hotly debating the authorship of thirteen plays discovered by T. Ganapati Sastri and assigned to Bhasa, not many knew the fact that most of these were presented in temples of Kerala in the form of Kutiyattam for centuries. The reason for the outside world knowing practically very little about this art form until very recent times is that it was confined to the precincts of temples of Kerala as the exclusive preserve of the acting communities. At least this was the hopeless scenario of Kutiyattam before the 'discovery' in the mid fifties of the twentieth century by the outside world.

The discovery of Kutiyattam by the world at large was not a random event. It was made possible by the concerted efforts of a number of stalwarts and scholars in the field. Actually, after India gained independence, it was the late Paimkulam Rama Cakyar, a great traditional artist of foresight who dared to take the art to the outside world weathering stiff resistance of die hard traditionalists. But if we examine the history of Kutiyattam, we can see that, contrary to the perceptions of traditionalists, Sanskrit theatre of Kerala had reached its present state through continuous evolution and change was not something totally unknown to it. It is well known that Kulasekhara of Mahodayapura, under whose aegis the art received tremendous popularity in Kerala in the medieval times had himself reformed the theatre. There are reasons to believe that the Sanskrit theatre, which was not an exclusive temple theatre in its origin, must have been grafted to the temple precincts during the medieval times to ensure its sustenance.

Be it as it is, it is an undeniable fact that Kutiyattam gradually started receiving the attention of Indologists and theatre artists of India and abroad when it was taken to the outside world. Its research value for an Indologist is obvious: We can now discern or at least hope to reconstruct the age-old conventions of the Sanskrit theatre in its traditional form from this art, which has an unbroken tradition of more than thousand years. Another important point is related to the performance of Sanskrit plays. More and more plays are brought under the ambit of Kutiyattam and performed on stage.

When we probe into the history of Kutiyattam we have to enquire about the performance traditions prevalent in ancient India, evidences of which, however, are extremely meagre. Nevertheless, we can conclude that Sanskrit drama has a long performance history as is attested by performance manuals like the *Natyasastra* and the vivid accounts such as found in Damodaragupta's *Kuttanimata*. However, the theatre became virtually extinct in the north after the first millennium due to a number of reasons like the decline of royal patronage, caused by the prevailing political unrest, the dwindling of classical tradition and the replacement of Sanskrit by vernaculars which made the classical play obscure to the general public. It seems to have been transplanted to the South during the process of Aryanisation. This long and continuous process probably began in the middle of the first millennium and gathered momentum from the seventh century AD onwards. In the South, classical Indian drama did survive even as it got extinct in the North. Plays were written and performed in centres like Kanci, wherein rulers like Mahendravikrama were themselves playwrights and patrons of learning.

We do not know when exactly Sanskrit theatre made its presence felt in Kerala, but it is certain that even in the eighth century AD, the time of Saktibhadra, we had a Sanskrit tradition of theatre here. Saktibhadra's *Ascaryacudamani*, a play dealing with the story of the Ramayana is staged till date in Kerala's temple theatre. It seems that the Sanskrit drama was performed in royal courts in Kerala as elsewhere in the beginning. Probably the early Buddhist settlers also might have used it for religious propaganda as evidenced by the popularity of *Nagananda* here. Gradually, it must have been grafted to the temple ritual when the Kerala agrarian societies were organized in Brahmin settlements with temples as their nucleus.

It seems that there must have been also a fusion of the indigenous theatrical forms and Sanskrit play performance in the evolution of the present day Kutiyattam. The ancient *Tamilakam* region had a rich tradition of oral discourses called *Kuttu* and the Sanskrit performance tradition must have come to be amalgamated with this regional theatre in a process of remarkable indigenization. Many of these changes were the products of continuous evolution, but some are said to be introduced by King Kulasekhara of

Mahodayapura, himself a playwright and patron of Sanskrit literature and Tolan, his companion. As a result of the changes introduced by this duo, classical Sanskrit theatre came to use Malayalam also in addition to the regular Sanskrit and Prakrit and the character Vidusaka became a prominent figure in Kerala theatre. Enactment of the play gradually came to be confined to certain acts and the previous story narrated in introductory discourses called *Nirvahana*.

The Kutiyattam is performed by the acting community consisting of Cakyar, Nambiar and Nangyar. The male characters are enacted by the Cakyar and the female characters by Nangyars. The Nambiars, the male counterparts of the latter are the professional drummers who play the instrument *Milavu*. There were eighteen families belonging to the Cakyar community, the mainstay of the art, but now it has been reduced to three. These families were assigned the performance of the enactment of the ritual at various temples all over Kerala and various entitlements fixed to them, which ensured the continuity of the ritual across centuries.

The plays presented in Kutiyattam make an intriguing list. The most conspicuous omissions are plays of celebrities like Kalidasa, Sudraka, Bhavabhuti and Visakhadatta. The reasons are obscure. But fortunately we have most of the plays ascribed to Bhasa, though now the staging of plays except portions from *Pratijnayaugandharayana*, and *Abhiseka* has become practically extinct. Harsa's *Nagananda* was popular though *Ratnavali* and *Priyadarsika* were not staged. Another hot favorite was Mahendravikrama's *Mattavilasaprahasana*. An early and frequently staged play is the *Ascaryacudamani* of the Keralite author Saktibhadra of the eighth century. The *Kalyanasaugadhikavyayoga* of Nilakantha and *Bhagavadajjuka* of Bodhayana are also some old interesting plays. But the most frequently staged plays were of King Kulasekhara himself, whose *Subhadradhananjaya* and *Tapatisamvarana* were very popular on the stage probably because of their authorship by the King, who was a great patron of Sanskrit learning. Recently, there has been a concerted attempt to revive the performance of plays which have for long been extinct on the stage as well as to stage plays like *Abhijnanasakuntala* which were never staged before.

Kutiyattam was conventionally staged in specially constructed temple theatres called *Kuttampalam.* Many important temples of Central and South Kerala like those at Trichur, Irinjalakkuda, Kidangoor, Harippad, Guruvayur, Peruvanam, Muzhikkulam, Tirunakkara and Chengannur have their own *Kuttampalams* which used to stage the Sanskrit drama regularly as a structured ritual. Most of the *Kuttampalams* are rectangular in shape as mentioned in texts like the *Natyasastra* even though they do not possess characteristics like *Mattavarini.* One half of the structure is earmarked for the audience. The other half consists of the stage and the green room, which is connected with the former through two doors. The stage is usually raised from the level ground by one foot and its area ranges from 21"4' x 21"4' square feet and 9"4' x 9"4' square feet. The stage is demarcated by four to twelve decorated pillars, which support a roof having architectural decorations. The low roof of the stage creates a bigger than life image for the actors dressed up in their costumes. The *Kuttmpalams* have excellent auditory properties and good ventilation. The biggest theatre as in the Vadakkumnathan temple of Trichur can accommodate two to five hundred spectators at a time. A big oil lamp placed in front of the stage serves as the focal point of the stage wherein the actors face the main audience sitting in front of them. The Kutiyattam performance has four aspects: the preliminaries called the *Purvaranga* as in the *Natyasastra,* the summing up of the previous story called *Nirvahana,* the enactment of the text proper, and the final concluding ceremony called *Mutiyakkitta.*

The preliminaries were an elaborate affair beginning with the offstage ceremonial preparation called *Talayilkettuka,* the symbolic tying of the red headgear by the main actor. This is preceded by several rituals like the ceremonial shaving of the hair, ablution in water, the formal permission receiving ceremony, the lighting of the two wicks of the stage lamp, and the worship of Lord Ganesa and others in the green room. Thereupon, he touches his face with clarified butter and other articles of cosmetics. After this headband ceremony, the actor cannot remove the cloth before the performance is over and his ritualistic status is akin to that of the institutor [*yajamana*] in a sacrifice. After the ceremony, the actor takes to his appropriate costume while the drummer plays the *Mizhavu* kept on the stage.

The second part of the preliminary is the decoration of the stage. The pillars of the stage are covered with unbleached clothes and decorated with plantain trees having fruits and bunches of coconut and arecanut leaves. A big lamp is placed on the forefront of the stage and hanging lamps all over the stage. A full measure of unmilled rice [*nirapara*] with a bunch of coconut flowers and the eight auspicious articles called *Astamangalya* are also placed on the stage, along with the offerings to Lord Ganesa on a plantain leaf. The *Mizhavu* drum is placed in its wooden stand at the back of the stage and covered with unbleached cloth. A sheet of white cloth is placed on the floor in front of the *Mizhavu* wherein the female singer belonging to the caste of Nangyar is to sit.

In the next phase, the drummer, who is the stage manager of the prelude [*Nandisutradhara*] comes forward and seeks the formal permission of the authorities of the temple for the performance. He enters the stage from the left side and places the cymbals on the white cloth spread in front of the female singer's seat. He lights the third wick of the lamp and approaching from the right side, sits behind the *Mizhavu*. He starts playing the *Mizhavu* in *Ekatala* after due worship of the family god and Lord Siva. Then the chief priest of the temple comes to the stage and performs the worship of Lord Ganesa for the successful completion of the performance.

Afterwards, it is the turn of the female singer to enter the stage and she sits down on the cloth spread for her to sound the cymbals to the rhythm of the drum. She sings verses called *Akkitta* in praise of Lord Ganesa, Siva and Sarasvati. In between the verses, the drummer plays intricate rhythmic patterns. The duet is called *Gosthi kottuka*. After all the rites are over, the drummer comes close to the front lamp and sprinkles the stage with flower, water and sandalwood paste while reciting a benedictory verse. He salutes Brahma by touching the ground and then returns to the green room. This is called the *Arangutali.* The preliminaries come to a close with this.

The performance proper begins with the ceremonial entrance of the actor called *Purappadu.* In the case of the main characters, a red curtain is held on the stage to conceal the identity of the character. Naturally, this excites great curiosity in the audience. The drummer plays a particular rhythm and the actor, facing the *Mizhavu* drums makes obeisance to them. The actor then performs some dance to the beat of the drum, also behind the curtain. This is called the *Marayilkriya,* the ritual behind the curtain. Thereupon, the curtain is removed and the character faces the audience. If it is the *Sutradhara,* he takes five ceremonial steps (*Pancapadavinyasa*), comes forward and sits in a specific posture. In the case of other characters, the actor attains the mood and the specific posture. In the case of other characters, the actor attains the mood and the specific type of the character through some set movements and conventions. Thereupon, the actor introduces the text of the play through some gestures. This introductory acting however is not a part of the regular enactment of the text, which is yet to begin. For, when these pure movements are performed, the actor has not assumed the role of the character. In order to indicate his status, the actor takes his upper scarf from his waist to his left shoulder, tying it into two knots and unties the two ends of his lower garment. This enactment is followed by some dance movement, technically called *Nityakriya,* usually accompanied by the songs from the female singer. After this performance, the actor again assumes the role of the character and returns to the temple, signalling the end of the day's performance.

Performance of the actual text is prefaced by the narration of the previous story. This is done in three stages, *Anukrama, Samksepa* and *Nirvahana.* The first part of the text having been given in the *Purappadu* ceremony of the previous night, the actor begins *Anukrama,* 'the sequence' which consists of describing what has happened in the past through questions in the reverse order. The actor sits on the stool, and looking at the audience pays obeisance to it with folded hands resembling the lotus in a technical style called

Kamalaparivartana. For example, in the enactment of the second act of *Nagananda*, the actor donning the role of Jimutavahana asks, through gesticulation, the following questions in a reverse chronology: How did Jimutavahana meet and fall in love with Malayavati in Gauri's hermitage? Before that how did he go to the hermitage of Gauri? Before that, when traveling on the mountain to construct his hut for penance, how did he see the hermitage of Gauri? And so on the questions lead to and stop at the very beginnings, being directed towards the origin of Himalaya which was the abode of the Vidyadharas. The *Anukrama* ends with the survey of the audience and the *Kamalaparivartana* obeisance and then the *Sanksepa* narration begins. The actor narrates how the capital of the Vidyadharas was fashioned at the time of the creation of the world and how Jimutaketu, the king reigned there. The narration continues with the story of Jimutavahana, his son, the reigning prince, who visits his parents in the forest in company with Maitreya, his friend. In the *Nirvahana*, all the questions asked in *Anukrama* are answered in the reverse order. Here the entire previous story of the first act of *Nagananda* is presented. The verses are sung by the female singer after their representation in gesture by the actors. When the story reaches the present situation, the text of the play is taken up for performance. In the course of the play, the action is stopped whenever a major character is to enter and have his or her *Nirvahana*.

As pointed out by Pragna Thakkar Enros, the "past in the flashback" device is a very important and distinguishing element of Kutiyattam since it supplies the essentials of the previous story to the audience, which becomes necessary due to the limitation of the performance to select portions of the play. To quote Enros,

> A story in flashback is very dramatic in its effects and serves a number of purposes. Its format is such that it not only gives the incidents of the past, but also presents fully the personality of the main characters. In other words, it introduces a character's present situation, past experience and basic nature. Thus, when the actual text starts, the character's personality is to a certain extent established, and from

this the thread of the story can be picked up and developed. The most important thing about the story in flashback however is the way it is woven into the actual text of the play. A character starts with the first sentence of the text which arouses the interest of the audiences. He then reveals the past in a flashback which gives the background to the story, introduces the characters, highlighting those aspects of their personality important to the play, and suggests the *angirasa*—the main *rasa* or aesthetic experience of the play. The play does not start after the past in flashback, as is generally believed, but immediately with the entery of the first character. Thus the past in flashback, while not part of the actual text, is treated as a part of performance.[2]

In the actual enactment of the text following the *Nirvahana*, there will be a short introduction to all prose and verse passages. This is devoid of speech and simply enacted with gesture. Then the text is recited and enacted. An elaboration and interpretation follow through gesture. This is followed by a repetition of the last lines of the text, which gives some sort of continuity to the text. Since the elaboration and interpretation of the speaker last for even hours, it is quite common for the characters, including the person addressed, to leave the stage. This often gives the performance an impression of solo acting.

The final ritual at the close of the performance is called *Mutiyakkitta*. The drummer plays on his *Mizhavu* to announce that the stage is ready for the final bath (*Avabhrta*). The Cakyar comes to the stage with the headband on, carrying the holy water in a beaked vessel. He washes his face and feet and formally sips three mouthfuls of water as *Acamana* and then touches his ears, eyes, nose, chest and head with a particular finger, declaring that he is performing the final bath and uttering a prayer. He then sprinkles water on his head and body and on the stage and the audience. Taking one wick from the lamp, he invokes the god, describing a circle. Then he drops the wick on the floor, salutes the god again and prays for atonement (*Prayascitta*) for any lapse in the performance. He then ends the performance touching the ground.

The *Angikabhinaya* (bodily acting) of Kutiyattam is mainly based on the Kerala text *Hastalaksanadipika*. The work, even while retaining the basic features of the *Natyasastra*, has developed differences of detail with regard to the nature and usage of individual *Mudras* or hand poses which can be shown at with either or both of the hands. Of all, Kutiyattam, like Kathakali, makes use of twenty-four *Mudras*. They can be shown at five different levels, viz. below the navel, at the navel, chest, brow and above the brow. The *Mudra* should not exceed the range of the vision of the actor on his normal posture with head held erect. In other words, the actor should not have to turn his neck even slightly to have a view of the *Mudra*. The acting is technically distinguished into three, called *Irunnattam, Patinjattam* and *Ilakiyattam*. These represent acting done while sitting, standing and moving. The language of the gesture is extremely sophisticated and can convey even the number, gender, and case relation of the word, apart from its general meaning. In fact, the gesture language is a parallel language with its semantics and syntax. The *Mudras* are not static poses and at every moment present an impression of perpetual movements.

A unique and interesting feature developed by Kutiyattam and adopted by other art forms like Kathakali is what is technically called *Pakarnnattam* or the technique of assuming the nature of another character. Here, the individual actor enacting the role of a character like Arjuna or Subhadra may, when interpreting the text, momentarily assume the nature of another character and present his or her role for the time being. Suppose Arjuna is engaged in a soliloquy in which Subhadra, the heroine figures. Here the actor would himself turn into Subhadra momentarily, present her action and thought, and revert to his basic stature of Arjuna afterwards. This practice of mono acting gives unusual depth to acting, but in its extreme form, as when Sita has to assume the nature of Hanuman, it is not without aesthetic problems and has been attacked vehemently by works like the *Natankusa*, a critique of Kutiyattam. It has communicative problems also, since a layman will have absolutely no idea of what it is all about since the acting in such instances are not accompanied by any text. However, such portions of the presentation are occasions for the talented actor for the creative use of his/her skills and the delight of the discerning connoisseur.

The *Vacikabhinaya* is done mainly through what is technically called *Raga* or *Svara*. Padmasri Mani Madhava Cakyar has given the details of the various *Svaras* and their usage in his work, *Natyakalpadrumam*. Various *talas* are also assigned to the *Svaras*. The details can be represented in the following tabular form:

Svaras/Ragas and their usage[3]

Svara/Raga	Tala	Usage
Arta	*Dhruva*	*Sṛngara* and *Rati* of the heroes of the *Dhirodatta* type
Srikanthi	*Dhruva*	Verses at the end of an act, denoting the killing of the wicked people, description of dusk, noon, and devotion
Muddha	*Dhruva*	The *Sṛngara* related to Raksasas
Srikamaram	*Triputa* of the *Atidruta* [fastest] tempo	*Vipralambha* of *Raksasas*
Paurali	—do—	The *Vipralambha* of *Srirama* in its climatic stage
Bhinnapancama	*Ekatala*	*Vismaya* as an ancillary to *Sambhogasrngara*
Kaisiki	*Ekatala*	*Hasya* and *Bibhatsa*
Duhkhagandhara	*Ekatala*	*Karuna* and *Soka*
Tarkan	*Triputa*	*Krodha, Raudra*
Viratarkan	*Dhruva*	*Vira*
Dana	*Dhruva*	*Adbhuta, Bhayanaka*
Tondu	*Ekatala*	*Santa, Sama, Bhakti*
Indalam	*Ekatala*	Natural state of heroes of the *Uttama* variety.
Korakkurunji	*Dhruva*	Nature of monkeys

continued...

Svara/Raga	Tala	Usage
Muralindalam	*Dhruva* of slow tempo	*Srirama's Vipralambha*
Veladhuli	*Triputa* of medium tempo	*Hasya, Bhaya,* station at a distant place, impatience
Cetipancamam	*Dhruva*	The natural tone of secondary and inferior characters
Puranir	*Ekatala*	The description of rainy season, and dawn.
Khattantari	*Triputa*	Description of the killing of wicked people, benediction, prayer for auspiciousness
Antari	*Triputa*	Indicating the poet's words, narration of story

The various *Kramadipikas* or stage manuals contain instructions of the *Svaras* to be sung on proper occasions. There are regional variations found in the employment of *Svaras*. In this connection, there is an important point to be noted: Even though tradition uses the terms *Svaras* and *Ragas* to denote these voice modulation patterns, it would be wrong to confuse them with *Svaras* or *Ragas*, found in classical Indian music. The *Svaras/Ragas* of Kutiyattam do not possess the musical quality and the melodious individuality of the *Svaras* and *Ragas* of Classical music, which have accurate frequency regulations in regard to the basic *adharasruti* [basic tone] represented by the drone. The manner of articulation of the *Svaras* however, is very effective in capturing the mood of the context. The *Vacikabhinaya* of Vidusaka deserves special mention here. The Vidusaka of classical theatre, who is only a minor character, has undergone a remarkable transformation in Kutiyattam in as much as that he becomes the dominant figure with ample scope for elaboration and improvisations. The Vidusaka, who speaks Prakrit in the classical theatre, is allowed to speak Malayalam also and in doing so, he becomes a solo exponent of the text. He reproduces the dialogue of the other characters and translates them into the vernacular language and expounds the meaning. In doing so, the Vidusaka introduces a lot of fresh material into his structured text like parodies, of the original verses sung by the hero, anecdotes and illustrations which are all delivered in Malayalam. Another feature of the dialogue of the Vidusaka is that he involves the audience also into the time-space frame of the play, identifying them as characters. The Vidusaka is, as suggested by Kunjunni Raja, actually a 'chartered libertine' who can make fun of anybody among the audience and this is usually done by assuming that the particular individual targeted by him is actually a character in the play.

The costume of Kutiyattam bears close resemblance to those in Kathakali to such an extent that a layman may find it difficult to distinguish between the two. In fact, the costume and make up of Kathakali is a refined form of the former. The characters in the play are divided into various types on the basis of their nature and stature and various types of costumes and makeup like *Pacca, Pazhukka, Kari,* and *Katti* and *Tati* accorded to them. Generally, heroes are indicated by *Pacca* and *Pazhukka.* Heroes like Arjuna take *Pacca,* while some characters like Jimutavahana in *Nagananda* and Samvarana in *Tapatisamvarana* are adorned with *Pazhukka.* In *Pacca,* the face is painted green and lips painted red, and the eyes and brows are blackened. The character wears a prominent white paste, or of late, a curved paper frame called *Cutti,* which 'extend down to the curve from the cheekbone to and the sides of the jaw to join at the chin'.[4] The *Pazhukka* costume is more or less the same, save the difference that the face and lips are painted red. The *Sutradhara's* face is also painted red. Characters like Ravana, who are of demonic nature and haughty in temperament are represented with green face. A long moustache in red and white is also added to their face. A red and white design is painted on the nose and between the eyes which extends to the forehead in a knife-shaped design over the eyebrows which gives a weird appearance to the character, enhancing his evil nature. This design is called *Katti.* A white knob, resembling the nose of a rhinoceros, is also attached to the nose of the actor. Otherwise, the character resembles the *Pacca* type with *Cutti* and other facial designs. Demons and similar sinister characters are represented in the *Kari* type of costume wherein the actor is painted black, with white marks in the forehead, and cheeks. The lips are painted red. Surpanakha in her terrible form takes this costume and is always represented by a male actor, while her beautiful human disguise is represented by a woman actor hersef. Another type of costume is *Tati*, which is based on the color of the beard, and this is generally given to characters like the monkey. There are two types of this character, the red beard and the white beard. Characters like Valin, who are egocentric, take the former, while those devoted and kind, like Hanuman are white bearded. The Vidusaka, an important character has his own peculiar costume. His face and limbs are painted with white paste made of rice flour and brown spots are applied to his body. Black color is applied to his eyes and brows. His moustache, drawn with charcoal, has one tip pointed upwards and the other downwards. The orchestration in Kutiyattam mainly consists of a couple of the pot drum *Mizhavu*, already mentioned, placed on stands near the green room, the cymbals played by the female singers, the conch sounded at the entrance of divine characters, *Itakka*, the percussion instrument and the *Kurumkuzhal*, the small pipe. But the most prominent instrument is the *Mizhavu*, which is sounded throughout the performance except when the actor bids its stoppage formally for the deliverance of the dialogue.

The history of Kutiyattam is the story of the remarkable transformation of a relatively secular art like the Sanskrit play into a temple art. The manner in which this transformation took place in the medieval times is very fascinating. Even in the case of relatively secular plays like the *Pratijnayaugandharayana*, the ritual came to be integrated to the enactment and the play production became more or less an annual ritual with fixed entitlements (*Avakasa*) prescribed to the actors and drummers in temples like the Vadakumnathan Temple of Trichur. In the case of plays like *Mattavilasa*, there is even the articulation of the fruit (*Phalasruti*) like the begetting of a son as in a ritual like the sacrifice or an offering. This must have ensured the preservation of enactment traditions of the play in the temple with the sponsorship of believers. Kings and chieftains of medieval Kerala entrusted various Cakyar and Nambiar families with the performance of Kutiyattam performance in designated temples and gave a property grant to them for livelihood apart from the prescribed entitlements. The acting communities have till date followed these conventions and discharged the duties assigned to them with religious fervour, thus preserving Kutiyattam for posterity.

NOTES

1. Producing Plays in the Tradition of Kutiyattam, In *Sanskrit Drama in Performance*, Ed. Rachel Van M Baumer and James R. Brandon, Hawaii, Honolulu, 1981.
2. See also, C. Rajendran, 'Vacikabhinaya in Kerala's Traditional Sanskrit Theatre', *Sangeet Natak*, Vol. XLI, No.1, 2007.
3. *Sanskrit Drama in Performance*, p. 290

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A Physicist's Personal View of Homeopathy

Homeopathy is one of those things that arouses immediate reaction, indeed passion, in most people. A Google search for *homeopathy* yields nine hundred and fifty-one thousand hits sixteen-hundredths of a second. Modifying the keyword to *homeopathy* produces no less than seven million, five hundred and seventy thousand 'results' in less than six-hundredths of a second, showing that the American spelling of the word is by far the preferred version for aficionados. While this is understandably less stupendous than the Google results for *sex* (a staggering eight hundred and sixty million in less than five-hundredths of a second!), it is still quite impressive. There can be no doubt that homeopathy is quite a preoccupation for sizeable segments of the human race.

There are really two very different questions involved in any discussion of homeopathy: (i) Does it work? (ii) Is its formulation consistent with modern scientific methodology as we understand the latter phrase? These questions are only loosely related to each other. If we understand that clearly at the outset, almost all of the heat and noise that usually accompanies the debate can be avoided.

A basic problem is that homeopathy has been formulated like a dogma. It is not self-correcting or inclusive like a normal science is. The latter keeps expanding its boundaries, and does not hesitate to back-track and correct its earlier stance when new evidence comes in. Homeopathy, on the other hand, is largely based on Hahnemann's 'insight' or 'revelation', as laid down by him—and as amended with equal arbitrariness by several subsequent followers, when they found that some of his 'principles' were too patently absurd for even the blindest adherent to swallow. It is obvious that the dilutions ('potencies') involved in the medicinal prescriptions of homeopathy, like one part in ten raised to the power of two hundred, are not merely preposterous, but just plain silly. There are nowhere near ten raised to the power of two hundred elementary particles in the entire known universe. So—all right, perhaps he was mistaken about that, it's just a small error (it is by no means small), and maybe it should be just one part in two hundred, or two thousand, or twenty thousand, or something? Does it matter? With this kind of shifting goalpost and convenient alteration of interpretation, what are we talking about?

A more candid précis of homeopathy could well be something like: "Here is a more-or-less random set of compounds that seem to work in the case of some ailments. The precise active ingredients are unknown, but they're present—or probably present, or maybe present—who knows, what does it matter—in various strange places ranging from tree bark to dried buffalo tails. So we thought we'd process them into tiny little round white sugar-coated balls and label them with Latin names so you'll think they're exotic and therefore powerful, and sell them to you, after patiently listening to you describing your symptoms at length. You see, we know that the *other* kind of doctor doesn't let you get a word in edgewise, but only goes on prescribing more expensive tests, so you already think we're giving you a much better deal. Now do be sure take the little sugary balls every day before dawn and after sundown so that the sun's rays don't make them lose their 'power', and you'll feel a lot better. If you don't, come back and tell us and we'll just change the 'potency'. But if you do feel better, we know you'll automatically have this irresistible urge to tell all your friends, and that kind of purely anecdotal recommendation is the staunchest advocate and strongest advertisement we could ever have asked for!

More seriously: the obvious phenomenon that comes to mind as being the one that could be involved in many 'successful cures' is *catalysis.* Maybe even extremely small doses of heavy metals and ions could have large effects on the incredibly complicated biochemistry that goes on inside ourselves? This is not only possible, but also a demonstrable fact. And maybe the homeopathic ('homeopathetic' would be a low blow!) principle of viewing the symptoms as the disease, and basing the 'cure' on the symptoms alone, is not an altogether outlandish one—because symptoms arise when the body makes an effort to protect itself from further damage, and the immune system starts taking steps to cure the body; therefore, inducing further production of antibodies or whatever. That this takes place by the catalytic action of something that imitates or even exacerbates the symptoms isn't such a bad idea after all? *Maybe.* But it certainly can't be the whole story. And it's all done by most of its practitioners in such a scientifically sloppy manner, and in such a curtly dismissive 'I'm a seasoned adept, and I have an intuition about these things that I can't be bothered to formulate explicitly' fashion, that it reduces to little more than a cult, and many serious would-be investigators get turned off.

What are we to make of a 'system' of medicine that, till fairly recently, didn't think that *anatomy* had anything to do with medicine, but only *symptoms* did? The grudging nod given to subjects like anatomy (let alone more advanced ones like surgery) in more recent 'schools of homeopathy' have more to do with the desire for *acceptability* as a science (by a public that is nowadays more exposed to the technological tools developed by science, and hence imagines itself to be more scientific than its predecessors), than the actual development of the subject of homeopathy *as* a science, if that were at all possible.

The second problem is that, contrary to that one might guess offhand, it is remarkably hard to collect significant statistical data in a scientific manner on the efficacy of fringe medicines of various kinds. This is especially so for data on *comparative* studies of different systems of medicine, especially vis-á-vis conventional medicine. A precise description of the problem would involve going into the details of the protocols that are required to be set up for meaningful studies of this kind. For the purposes of illustration, however, let me describe in rather naive fashion the kind of study that would be entailed in comparing conventional medical treatment of some common ailment with, say, the treatment of the same ailment by homeopathy. We would need a sufficiently large number of patients in nearly the same physical condition, to be observed over a fairly protracted period while under different treatment regimens. For example, we might start with four hundred patients all suffering from essentially the same ailment, and separate them into four groups A, B, C and D of a hundred each. (Fifty each would be too small a number, and five hundred each might be much more difficult to line up.) Group A is then treated by conventional medicines, group B by placebos for such medicines, group C by medicines prescribed by homeopathy, and group D by placebos for these medicines. Additional safeguards such as double blinds must be incorporated. Careful monitoring of all the patients and recording of the data must be followed by a rigorous statistical analysis of the results. You can readily imagine how difficult it will be to get everybody involved to agree upon the details, and to even set up such an elaborate study.

Unfortunately, the practitioners of conventional medicine also contribute in some measure to the difficulties just described. One cannot help getting the impression that a section of the medical fraternity itself operates in some respects like an exclusive guild, loath to expose too many of its 'secrets' to open and unbiased scrutiny. As a trite manifestation of this tendency, haven't we all faced doctors who don't really like to explain things in detail to lay persons, and who think that the rest of us are basically too dense to understand the deep mysteries of their subject? It is not unusual to get a patronising brush-off when one asks questions that are more penetrating than a meek: "Should I take this tablet before food or after food?" And the practitioners of fringe medicine are *even more* secretive, paranoid about being questioned, and aggressively defensive (and evasive) about their particular recipes and panaceas—perhaps with good reason! At any rate, getting together whole groups of people with such strongly divergent views, for an objective and impartial study by knowledgeable neutral observers, would probably be even more difficult than running a peaceable inter-faith meeting among a gaggle of monomaniacal religious leaders. Even within the framework of conventional medicine, given the vested interests of diverse players including rival pharmaceutical firms, distributors, financiers, advertising agencies, doctors, hospitals, research funding agencies, research laboratories, and other sectors of the medical world, arranging for reliable, unbiased clinical trials of an experimental drug is difficult enough, as a long-suffering public has learnt, to its cost.

The fact is that the empirical content of medicine as a discipline is still quite high. There's actually nothing wrong with that, *per se*. Sound empirical knowledge is the starting point for a sturdy science. But, unfortunately, many medical specialists themselves seem to feel, rather needlessly, that this empirical component somehow *diminishes* the scientific credentials of their discipline, and makes it less high-brow than it deserves to be. Therefore, in order to keep up the notion that their particular form of medicine is completely scientific, these experts feel that they must constantly remind lay persons that all but the broadest details of their speciality are too complex to be explained easily to a non-specialist. Such evasions are made easier, and more persuasive, by the fact that most people visit doctors only when they are already in a rather helpless situation and a vulnerable state of mind, which makes them psychologically less discerning than usual. What is being missed here by both parties is that empirical knowledge does not make medicine unscientific, but merely less deterministic than a subject with a more developed analytical framework. But the very hallmark of a developing science is the gradual replacement of empirical content by a methodological structure that enables greater predictability and control. In this sense there need be no misgivings about the scientific nature of modern medicine.

If this is the state of affairs even with conventional modern medicine, it is no wonder that the ambivalence of identity is much more pronounced in the case of various frings or 'alternative' systems of medicine—all too many of which are no more than *purported* systems of medicine. Nor is it hard to understand why such systems are *even more* reluctant to subject themselves to serious, objective, unbiased, third-party evaluations and tests under carefully-documented and controlled conditions. Most of the claims of these systems would not withstand rigorous *scientific* scrutiny at even a cursory level, let alone deep and sustained probing.

We now come to the argument that is trotted out most frequently in favour of homeopathy: "But it really worked in the case of my nephew's jaundice, or my aunt's asthma!" No doubt it did, *as far as one can tell.* Or maybe something else did (naturopathy, acupuncture, ... take your pick, for the litany of sad tales of human gullibility is as fascinatingly varied as it is long). Or maybe what did it was a combination of prayer, homeopathy, bland food, the sympathy of relatives, the pleasant company of friends, calming music, and a regular regimen and plenty of fresh air and sunshine and the curtailment of antibiotic overdose. And let's not forget the most helpful de-stressing effect of sincere *belief* in the efficacy of those little sugary balls in contributing to the eventual cure! The truth is that we have no sure-fire, foolproof way of knowing, or finding out, precisely what did it, notwithstanding the most sincere protestations of the patient himself and the sworn testimony of those around the patient. The veracity of the patient is not under question here, nor is the probity of the witnesses. It is just that these qualities do *not* suffice to yield, and *cannot* replace, truly objective scientific experimentation and observation. Such is the level of rigour and control demanded by the uncompromising procedure of data acquisition in science.

It is obvious that we have barely scratched the surface of the immense knowledge of what our body and mind can do in tandem with each other. We simply do not know enough about what the subtle mechanisms are, where they lie, and exactly what triggers them. We haven't even figured out how the immune system itself, a sort of mobile *in situ* 'brain' located all over our bodies, really works. When we do discover all these things, and we'll surely do so eventually (maybe in another hundred or two hundred years), matters will look a lot less mysterious than they do now. Meanwhile, what about homeopathy to cure this ailment or that? Should one take recourse to it? Well, if it works for you, or if you think it works for you, or if you think it will work for you because it worked for a friend whose word you trust, or if you think you have nothing to lose by trying it out, why shouldn't you do so—*provided* you aren't imprudent enough to neglect a truly serious and threatening health situation for which there does exist a scientific method of treatment? But there's no need to swallow (along with those little sugary balls) the accompanying hype about its being a *scientific* mode of treatment, because it just isn't so. *Caveat emptor!*

The dilemma that seems to arise (at least for the small segment of the population that prides itself on being rational in all matters) is whether one is then being unscientific in practice, while professing to adhere to scientific principles. This is a more difficult question, but the answer is simple and virtuous. It is quite evident that everything we do in daily life is *not* necessarily scientific—often because there are as yet no satisfactory scientific underpinnings or theories for those things! As obvious examples, we have the enjoyment of fiction, of literature that speaks of purple skies and fairies in the garden, of poetry that swears that girls' eyes look like stars. Do we really want to point out to poets that girls' eyes can't possibly be related to enormous aggregations of hot gas undergoing nuclear fusion? On a more serious note, we have psychology and sociology and economics and finance, and the myriad other expressions of consciousness and free will for which we haven't even *begun* to frame the questions in the proper scientific manner. Does this—should this—preclude us from acknowledging their existence, experiencing their functioning, and enjoying their fruits? I should think not. But all of us *can* contribute to the *desideratum* of an ethos enhanced by a scientific and rational temper:

—We must refuse to encourage or accept 'explanations' that are mere mumbo-jumbo clothed in scientific jargon, as if this suffices to make them respectable, let alone correct.

—We need to recognize that the world around is a hierarchically organized progression into increasing complexity: from quarks to atoms and molecules, through biomolecules, cells and organisms, to humans and society, to ... who knows what?

—We ought to allow for the fact that science as we understand it is less than four hundred years old, which is—incredibly enough—just about a *dozen* human generations or so, when you think about it. This is less than a blink of an eye on evolutionary time scales, let alone geological time scales, much less cosmological time scales. It is rather negligible even compared to recorded history. For all those who admonish: "Don't think science knows everything or can answer all questions", I say: science does *not* think it knows everything, and we do need to give it a little more time! We must be alive to the possibility that scientific explanations may exist (and emerge one day) for most things, perhaps even all things, rather than get into a mystic mode and declare dogmatically that 'there are things beyond science'. They may indeed be beyond *today's* science, but how can anyone be so presumptuous as to declare that something will be beyond the ken of rational enquiry *forever*? Science is nothing if not eclectic, in the best sense of the word.

That's the whole point—what it doesn't know right now, science will eventually find out, and *incorporate* into its accumulated body of knowledge. That's equally true of medicine, naturally. One day we will surely find out exactly how asthma or eczema or other allergies can be controlled, and how and why little sugary balls containing a little arsenic, perhaps, and called *surefirecura mysteriosa* or something like that, may actually have helped trigger a cure in some cases. While not decrying the utility of this apparent magic in some instances for some individuals at some time, let's not confuse it with science. There is no real *need* to do so! Likewise, there is no need to take seriously the purveyors of apparently scientific explanations of why homeopathy works—and such theories emerge out of the woodwork with tireless regularity. Recent ones include the attribution of long-lived 'memory' to water molecules, and the invoking of a quantum mechanical phenomenon called entanglement. (Quantum mechanics seems to hold as fatal an attraction for pseudoscientists as the proverbial flame does for months.) Meanwhile, the most recent careful studies of the efficacy of homeopathy seem to indicate that it is essentially comparable to, and consistent with, that of placebos. The deep neurological and psychological reasons for placebo action are yet to be fully understood, but it is a real and well-documented phenomenon.

The probability of *Materia Medica* replacing molecular medicine texts in the year 2100 is near zero, if things go well. But should it happen, we can also be sure that our descendants of that day will be wearing rough animal hides and rubbing stone against stone to produce fire, while they discuss the relative merits of goat hair and bat droppings for relieving joint pain. In that case, none of this will matter. May that never come to pass!

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BOOK REVIEWS

P.K. Mohapatra, *Ethics and Society: An Essay in Applied Ethics.* New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 2008, pp. 246, Rs. 600

The book under review examines the nature of the relation between ethics and society. It shows how ethical theories can be fruitfully applied to practical life and can effectively deal with social problems like those concerning rights and justice, ethical issues in business and the professions as well as matters relating to the environment. The contents and the contention of this work were developed and consolidated mainly during the author's research as a Senior Fellow of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research during October 2002 to September 2004. Lectures and discussion at the Utkal, Poona and Ravindra Bharati universities during this period have considerably helped sharpen his ideas and arguments.

How is the term 'ethics' to be understood given the social developments that have taken place in the final quarter of the last millennium? Generally, the term ethics is understood as an embodiment of certain norms, principles, values, customs, etc. These norms, etc. are meant to guide and regulate man's conduct to ensure human social well-being . One may further reflect whether the ethical is to be taken, for example, in a normative sense, which suggests what we ought to pursue in order to be worthy of being human? Or is it factual, i.e. as describing what we actually pursue in our lives? Or is there a possibility to overcome the traditional separation between the 'ought' and the 'is' (introduced by Hume and pursued by Kant)? Or can ethics be applied in terms of Human Rights, Environment and Globalization? The distinction between norms and facts; prescriptive and descriptive; ought and is, and so on, are matters of degree and not of kind. The realm of ethics like the world of experience may be studied in detail and also in the context of some principles or laws. While philosophers, generally speaking, use terms such as *concepts* and *categories*, scientists prefer expressions such as *laws* and *theories*. The categories of philosophy and the laws of science are instantiable and concretisable. In the Indian tradition, the conceptual equivalent of 'practical' is *phalita* < *phal*, 'fruit'. No human endeavour, knowledge included, is an end in itself—it must bear the 'fruit' of *dharma*, general welfare. Here, the goal of knowledge is not promotion of man's comfort—it is, instead, the establishment of *dharma*, righteousness, which alone ensures *well-being*, individual and social. This *well-being*, defined not in purely material terms, subsumes wholesomeness and health. Different rational discourses are investigations into how to promote these two values in life—be it ethics, sociology, medicine, mathematics or astronomy. Dr. Mohapatra's book delves into these issues and that alone makes the study fruitful.

The book has been divided into six chapters namely: 'Ethics and the World'; 'Moral Personhood: Natural Propensity of Man to Act Morally'; 'Morality, Objectivity and Applicability; Ethics of Rights and Justice'; Ethics in Business'; 'Environmental Ethics: Duties to and Rights of Animals', 'Plants and the Environment'. These chapters have further been divided into several parts and sub parts. Sketching the nature of applied ethics, it goes on to address the theoretical issue of objectivity of ethical theories and moral reasons. Its distinctive contention that ethical theories and moral principles are necessary but *defensible* runs consistently throughout the book and helps clarify the described problems and solutions thereof. Defeasibility of ethical theories goes hand in hand with the author's plea for justified violations of ethical theories by a reasoned balance of spirit of the principles and the demands of the situation. The author's unique conception of moral personhood and his use of various strands of scholarship go a long way to buttress his argued contention of the relation of ethics to society.

The chapters that follow aim at bringing this into focus and suggest how the world and society can be made a desirable one to live in. This, the author contends, can be done by applying ethics (the ethical theories) in practical life and living up to it (pp.15–42). While the above contention is mainly argued in the first chapter, the second chapter purports to show that application of ethics to society is not only imperative in the described way, it is also a matter of natural necessitation. The author argues that to be moral is as much *natural* for man as it is for him to be rational—*man is a naturally moral* being in the sense that every human person has the natural propensity to act morally unless otherwise constrained (pp. 44–45). In fact man's moral nature follows jointly from his being rational as well as spiritual, both of which are shown to be constitutive of moral personhood. For while man's rationality makes us distinguish between what is moral from what is immoral, his spiritual faculty makes him identify with the moral and alienates him from the immoral. However, moral personhood and the essential morality of men have to be understood in tune with applied ethics (pp. 46–62). For, human nature being what it is, ethical theories not only need to be, but they must be, applied to solve the intriguing problems of practical life. Indeed, every ethical theory—rather every theory worth the name—has a built-in applicability. A theory is meant to be applicable, and the one that cannot be applied is not, and cannot be, a proper ethical theory. Most of the value crises that contemporary society is facing, or those that ancient societies often faced, are because of non-application, or apparent inapplicability, of ethical theories to practical life. Indeed it has often appeared that some celebrated ethical theories are inapplicable or, if applied, lead to consequences that are morally undesirable, even disastrous. It is argued that such predicaments are due to our taking these theories in their absolute, literal sense which, in turn, is because of our failure to strike a balance between the spirit of the theory and the demands of the situation. Applied philosophy, taking this into proper account, would require 'justified violations' of the moral principles, on appropriate occasions, in order to get over the predicaments, for these predicaments arise because of the principles being followed literally and unexceptionably. The required violations only indicate the fact that moral principles are not absolute in the conventional sense, but defensible under demanding circumstances.

Controversial cases, where celebrated moral principles seem to conflict, call for applied ethics which overcome the conflict by one of the rival theories revealing that there is an arguably overriding capacity in these demanding situations. This is a feature of the moral principles, along with the idea of these justified violations thereof.

The author raises the question—Does this idea of justified violation and the emphasis on the demands of the situation lead to relativism and denial of universality, absoluteness and objectivity of ethical theories and moral values? His answer to the question is—No, for it is argued that the absolute/relative distinction and the objective/subjective dichotomy, as have been customarily conceived, have been generally misconstrued. He exposes the futility of taking these distinctions in the absolute, literal sense and pleads for a liberal interpretation of them, which would show the ethical theories to be objective and yet fruitfully applicable to practical life. A theory being not objective in the absolute sense does not make it subjective. Taken in the absolute, literal sense, the described distinctions are only a philosopher's myth. Moral principles, in particular, admit of objectivity and universality of a secondary sort, in the spirit of what Nagel calls, "objective tolerance" (pp. 80–81). And this is where the subtle distinction between metaphysical realism and moral realism lies.

With this sort of theoretical account of objectivity and application of moral principles, the next three chapters make use of applied ethics in the context of (human) rights (pp. 98–120) and justices (pp. 121–132), as well as in the context of business and professional practices (pp. 134–163), rights of animals and nature or environment (pp. 178–233), For the author thinks that applied ethics in all these areas has a specially justified necessity since controversies involving moral conflicts are characteristically present in all these spheres, which often lead to socio-moral crises. Conflicts occur between rival rights of men—the fetus's right to life and the women's right to privacy, a patient's right to know the state of his health and doctor's right (duty!) to secrecy in the interest of the patient's welfare. Conflicts occur between rival duties as well—between *samanaya dharma* and *svadharma*, between universal duties and the particular duties of specific groups of men, between *samanaya dharma* and *Varna dharma*, that is; and this often leads to a corresponding conflict between general ethics and professional ethics. Conflicts are also encountered between ethics on the one hand, and business and professional practices, on the other—largely because of the latter's commitment to specific purpose and objective.

All these issues are laid bare and analysed by the author for what they are. Liberal interpretation of values and rights and emphasis on their necessity but defeasibility put the theories in a proper perspective and make their understanding and application possible and effective.

Notwithstanding the above merits of the book, let me draw the attention of the author to the present millennium which is different in its problems from all earlier such occasions. We have scientific knowledge which is the most delicate and advanced, technology which is the most capable and sophisticated, the fifth generation micro-soft with knowledge and information; but do we have wisdom to make use of all these so that there is a human face impressed on these achievements? One of the features of human history has been that people, resources, ideas and consciousness move from one place to another and in the wake of globalization these are moving all too fast and getting transformed gradually. The basic question arises what has been the role of values in the global consumerist culture? This is a point that Dr. Mohapatra would like to address either in the second edition of the book or in the forthcoming work of the kind; posterity will certainly profit from that.

Ethics has been an exciting aspect of philosophy. There has been a development in terms of its traditional links with political thought. Morals and conceptions of good are said to be relative to cultures, even large cultural identities have now disintegrated into smaller ones—with multiculturalism. Moral theories still oscillate between utilitarianism in so far as public policy decisions of the emerging democracies are concerned, and Kantianism, in so far as individual moral life and principles are concerned. Both of these alternatives, however appealing, are now seen to be of limited application. More attractive today are Aristotelian *Ethics* expanded to include many present-day virtues, and, a communitarian ethics, which goes back to a sort of Hegelian *Sittlichkeit* as the basis of one's moral conceptions. Both of these allow for pluralism and reject a monistic theory. Pluralism is the ethos of the day. On the one hand, there are the pluralities of nation-states, of world-religions, of large linguistic groups, with numerous internal differences; on the other hand, there is an overwhelming sense of one world, i.e. the world coming together through technology. The idea of a Global Village is an ideal, which is widely valued.

Applied ethics has issues, which are pertaining to action, consisting of, involving or resulting from action. Applied ethics suggests the ability to adopt means to an end or to turn what is at hand into a skill, the action or process of performing or doing something. Applied ethics, as it is, should show the way to study all the living issues. Applied ethics has to innovate a method of participation between knowledge and action, wisdom and behaviour, value and fact, theory and practice, and all such traditional and modern dichotomies. If we are able to show the participation, say, between abstract and concrete, we shall be in a position to appreciate the issues concerning applied ethics. This will help us to solve some of the apparently insoluble problems.

Besides these shortcomings, *Ethics and Society* by Dr. Mohapatra has been well thought out and will benefit teachers, students, researchers and all those interested in moral philosophy, social and political philosophy and practical ethics. The printing, the jacket design and the overall production of the book is satisfactory.

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C.K. Raju, *Cultural Foundations of Mathematics: The Nature of Mathematical Proof and the Transmission of the Calculus From India to Europe in the 16th c., CE.* New Delhi: Centre for Studies in Civilizations and Pearson Education in South Asia, 2007, pp. xlv+477, Rs. 1,600

This book brings new facts on the history of mathematics and science that if carried to its logical conclusions should transform our Eurocentric perceptions. The author C.K. Raju comes to this task with an impeccable hands-down knowledge of science and technology. He was a leading figure in the first supercomputer put together in India at a time when the US banned supercomputer exports to India, the ideology of computing in mathematics being identical to the Indian ideology of mathematics which he posits.

Science, Raju notes is (still) widely considered an internal domestic Western affair. Most conference organizers, teachers and researchers assume that the history and philosophy of science begins and ends within a Western trajectory. What he attempts is to bring new material from other cultures to fill in the gaps as well as highlight some of the contextual factors within Europe to highlight the particular wrong views he critiques.

He notes that the suppression of ideas has a long history in Europe. With the emergence of Christianity a lethal death penalty was declared on heretics and all schools of philosophy were closed down in the Roman Empire eventually leading to the [Christian] Dark Ages. Christian mobs led by violent priests burnt down the great library at Alexandria and attacked their ideological opponents like the neo Platonists. The suppressed European classical tradition was partly kept among the Arabs, the latter adding knowledge from the East including from India. However, when Europe began moving out of the Dark Age partly utilizing Arab knowledge, the entire knowledge found in Arabic books up to the 11th century including those with Indic inputs was subject to a strategy of Hellenization attributing them solely to Greek sources. There was now a revisionist history being marketed with the early Greeks becoming the fountain head of all knowledge at Toledo (the Arabic intellectual centre in Spain) and elsewhere where the Arab contribution was considered only as transmitters of Greek knowledge. But if one examines the facts objectively one arrives at a different picture.

Not even a single historical source of Greeks books is available from Alexandria, Raju points out. Raju claims that monumental theories of Greek source of science has been built from stray casual remarks in texts from the 12th century. I am not a Greek historian but the implications of this are truly revolutionary.

Raju throws a harsh historical light on some of the legendary figures in the Greek tradition and comes out with a huge question mark. For example, the key historical source of information of the presumed Euclid of the *Elements* is a single remark in a manuscript by no means written before the 10th century AD. The archaeological evidence indicates that there was no definitive text of the *Elements* before the fourth century. If this were the actual historical evidence about one of the better known figures such as Euclid the situation with others such as Archimedes, Aristotle, Ptolemy was also problematic although the existence of Aristotle is not in doubt.

Another such possible Greek origin myth was "Ptolemaic" astronomy. Raju asks the question that if Ptolemaic astronomy was such a well-developed system why did the diaspora from Ptolemaic Alexandria look towards Indian astronomy in the sixth century Persian city of Jundishapur where an Alexandrian academy had been established and again later in ninth century AD Baghdad.

Tracing the origin of the calculus Raju notes that differences and series expansion were used in India at least from the fifth century. Calculus started with the use of the infinite series. Knowledge of aspects of the calculus was known also from very early times, integration being done by Bhaskara II and differentiation since Brahmagupta. Series expansions led over a thousand year period to what was later called in Europe the Taylor expansion. That infinite series were known in India has been acknowledged by Europeans for 200 years but the connection between them and the calculus as it developed in Europe was not acknowledged.

Calculus was a key input to Newtonian physics. Infinite series expansions are to calculus what decimal fractions are to arithmetic. The infinite series "Taylor series" named after the pupil of Newton dates from 1715. The Taylor infinite series allowed Newton to use Kepler's description of planetary motion as ellpises to arrive at his inverse square law of gravitation. Before Newton used the infinite series expansions Indian astronomer Nilakantha could develop a planetary model similar to the one Tyche Brahe arrived at later.

There have been, Raju observes, two standards of evidence in Western history for the transmission of knowledge. One of a very lax standard of evidence for transmission from presumed Greeks and another, ultra-strict standard for transmission to the West from other sources such as the Indian ones.

Raju also notes that the history of science without its philosophy is blind, and that the philosophy of science without its history is lame. The present day philosophy of mathematics traces its roots to an assumed Greek tradition ignoring other traditions. There are strong epistemological contrasts between Greek and Indian approaches.

The Western tradition of mathematical proofs is through deduction based on logic given a set of axioms. But he points out that there could be different axioms and different types of logic as in Buddhist and Jain logic. In the Indian tradition proof is through practice—there was no separation of abstract conceptualizations from everyday reality. In the eastern tradition proof was empirical. Mathematics was calculation as opposed to mathematical proofs from a set of apriori axioms.

The epistemological discontinuities between the two traditions were also seen in the difficulty Europe had in absorbing the numeral zero, *sunya* which went to the West from at least the 10th century but took several centuries to be accepted. So great was the conceptual chasm to be bridged that although the practical application of Indian mathematics were valued in the West it took nearly 500 years for the system to be fully absorbed.

In the 16th century there was the transfer of mathematical and astronomical manuscripts from Cochin through Portuguese Jesuit priests. Part of this transfer included ideas of infinitesimals and the calculus. Again an epistemological struggle of the two approaches ensued in Europe which was resolved only towards the end of the 19th century.

Raju details the transmission of aspects of the calculus from India into Europe. This was in connection with the European navigational problem related to the determination of latitude, longitude and loxodromes. Finding that navigation was very important to the formation of European interest in mathematics during the 16th century and afterwards Raju traces key contributions from India which the Europeans of the 16th century took back to Europe. But like in mathematics there were difficulties in adopting Indian knowledge because European knowledge of the size of the earth was different from the Indians which latter was much nearer to modern figures. Unfortunately unlike Arab historians European historians have not acknowledged the contribution of this Indian knowledge.

In a chapter on the contemporary relevance of the revised history he presents, Raju shows that the epistemic divide in approaches to maths takes centrestage. The two streams of inherited mathematical traditions are one from Greece and Egypt and the other from the Indian subcontinent through Arab intermediaries. The result has been centuries long "maths wars" which recalls the cultural wars in the last couple of decades in the US. These maths wars have now been reconciled somewhat with the use of computers in mathematics which undermines traditional Western notions of mathematics.

The author is well read in comparative philosophy and history and shows much familiarity with both the Western tradition and those of other civilizations primarily the Indic one.

The author had wanted the book to be a joint project together with other scholars but due to exigencies has been made to do it as his own. The book brings together various papers made over a 10-year period by the author to an interconnected stream. Some of the material however does not hang together as a flow, the book reading sometimes as sections brought together and pasted from earlier work. Sometimes there is repetition. Good copyediting would have improved the flow of the book making it easier to digest.

The parallel to this book that I can point out are the three volumes of Martin Bernal on *Black Athena* which first demonstrated the falseness of the premise that Greece was the fountain head of knowledge. Bernal showed convincingly that the enthronement of Greece in the early 19th century was for the ideological purposes of Western expansion into other countries which required downsizing the contribution of non-European civilizations. Bernal's book struck at the very heart and ideology of Western classical studies. He consequently wondered how it would be received. But surprisingly the opposition was limited and most of what he has said has now been taken in by the Western academic establishment. But Bernal was working in an American academic milieu and he was the son of the well-known social historian of science H.D. Bernal.

The material presented in this volume by Raju would require a re-examination of much Western historiography of mathematics and science. Its acceptance into the "mainstream" history of science and mathematics (read as legitimized in the West) requires that this information of Raju reaches those who study the history of science in the West. Unfortunately the history of science in the West is still extremely Eurocentric paralleling the history of philosophy which is considered as only European philosophy. A few years ago I attended the history of science conference in Minnesota and found that I was the only person presenting a paper on Asian history of science. The acceptance of the facts presented by Raju would be hampered by the contours of the present rigged geopolitics of knowledge.

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Manoj Kumar Pal, *Old Wisdom and New Horizon*. New Delhi: Centre for Studies in Civilizations and Viva Books, 2008, pp. xxv+495, Rs. 1,895

The intellectual community is fortunate in that as least a few scientists choose to write about matters outside their formal specialization. Generally these are senior people, with a long record of scientific accomplishments behind them and with the sort of maturity it takes to transcend the boundaries of their own individual hard core science. It enables them bring a different perspective to bear on their observations of, say, philosophy, religion or politics, by virtue of their scientific training and background.

Interestingly many of the scientists who have successfully done this have been theoretical physicists. Prominent among such examples are Stephen Hawkings, Roger Penrose, Freeman Dyson and the great Einstein himself. The volume under review (*Old Wisdom and New Horizon* by Manoj Kumar Pal, published jointly by the Centre for Studies in Civilisations and Viva Books, New Delhi) has also been authored by a theoretical physicist. Professor Manoj Pal, one of the best nuclear theorists that India has produced, also brings with him considerable administrative experience having steered the affairs of the prestigious Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics at Kolkata for a decade as its Director.

The range of subject matter covered here is much larger than most books of this type. Certainly this volume contains a substantial discussion of topics that are often found in books written by scientists for the larger public, such as the history of scientific discoveries or their philosophical implications. But it also has several chapters devoted to history and religion, not just of India but also of ancient Greece, Egypt and the Middle East. More than half of this large volume (495 king sized pages) deals with the ideas and practices of earlier civilizations, as well as to early man and his anthropology. This is not a collection of just casual post-retirement reflections of a scientist on larger matters. To write such a book must have required decades of sustained interest and scholarship in history, philosophy and anthropology, which the author would have had to maintain alongside his regular work of physics research and administrative duties. I have known and admired Professor Pal as a physicist for nearly 40 years but such is his unpretentious personality that I had no idea of his vast depth of scholarship in history and religion.

I do not have the expertise to critically review the material in the chapters dealing with ancient history and religion. But I do wish to make some general remarks about them before going on to those portions of the book that deal with ideas in physics. I found, as I gingerly browsed through the unfamiliar terrain in the first half of the book, that many sections were in fact accessible even for non experts. I was also rewarded with many enjoyable pearls of wisdom. At several places, concepts in religion and history are made more precise for the lay reader by the clarity and logical coherence of the theoretical physicist author.

Professor Pal also juxtaposes his discussion of ancient civilizations with what transpires today in corresponding situations, drawing parallels and lessons. To give one of many such examples, he describes in his essay on "The Hellenic Legacy" the contempt in which philosophical giants like Plato and Aristotle held the "Sophists"—a term used in ancient Greece for middle level intellectuals who earned a living by teaching various subjects and skills. The book quotes Plato as saying, "[the sophists] are wholesale exporters of spiritual goods manufactured by others". Professor Pal points out that in the modern world of physics such an attitude would be tantamount to requiring that "only masters like Einstein, Gell-Mann, Feynman, Fermit, etc. are entitled to be associated with physics and the vast number of less talented researchers and teachers in universities are to be banished from the field ..." Certainly such snobbery would not be tolerated in today's democratic environment, but remnants of this attitude remain. Even today, a handful of leading scientific research Institutes in India view our universities and colleges containing thousands of teachers with condescension.

Chapters 6 and 7 follow the essays on ancient civilizations, though these should perhaps have preceded them in the book. Chapter 6 summarizes the geological history of the earth around the time of the genesis of early man. Chapter 7 describes the transition from pre-historic man and his innovations of tools, agriculture and speech, all the way to the ancient civilizations in the fourth and third millennia BC. These chapters on Anthropology and ancient civilizations are followed by two essays on Christianity and Islam. Then comes a chapter on the methodology of classical science and a capsule summary of topics in classical physics, including a thumbnail sketch of Newtonian Mechanics, Optics and Thermodynamics that forms a bridge to later chapters that deal directly with modern physics. This chapter also contains a short discussion on the Special Theory of Relativity.

In the last portion of the book, the author has chosen to describe two developments in twentieth century theoretical physics which are generally considered the most difficult to understand. These are Quantum Theory and the General Theory of Relativity. As the legend goes, Einstein's General Theory of Relativity (GR) was considered so difficult even decades after its formulation that once someone remarked to the formidable English physicist Eddington, "I hear only two people in the world understand General Relativity". To which Eddington is said to have replied: "Oh Really? And who is the other?"

True or not, that makes a good story and it does correctly represent the awe in which Relativity was held after it was proposed. When GR arrived, the notion of curved space time that it proposed was difficult for people to visualize and the mathematical apparatus of Riemannian geometry that the theory involved was unfamiliar to most physicists. But Riemannian geometry is old hat by now and I would estimate that not just "two" but thousands of people in the world now understand the basics of GR. It continues to remain a difficult subject, but it is still a part of classical (i.e. non quantum) physics. It is logically complete and self-contained and its basic philosophical underpinnings as a science are standard.

Notwithstanding General Relativity's early reputation as the most difficult part of physics, Quantum Theory, discussed in Chapter 12 of this book, is actually much more difficult to truly comprehend, for different reasons. In terms of the mathematical skills that you need to understand and use quantum mechanics it is indeed simpler than GR. The central equation of Quantum Mechanics, the Schrodinger equation, is just a linear differential equation, unlike the Einstein equation in GR which is nonlinear. The mathematical structure of state vectors and operators needed in QM are not hard to understand either, at least at a non-rigorous level, by generalizing from ordinary matrices and vectors. In the past 75 years, perhaps over a hundred thousand physicists have used the Quantum Theory to predict and understand the behaviour of atoms, molecules and nuclei. Billions of pieces of experimental data have been explained in physics and chemistry to amazing accuracy by the Quantum Theory, which in my view is the most accurate and sophisticated scientific construct of the human mind.

But all this is at the operational level. At the conceptual and philosophical level the Quantum Theory raises difficulties related to its profound differences with all earlier scientific theories. One well known difference is regarding determinism. The theory makes only probabilistic predictions. This does not diminish its usefulness provided it is applied, as with any probabilistic theory, to a large collection of identical systems. For instance, insurance companies use probabilities for different accidents and disasters to successfully make big money since they apply their predictions to a large number of individuals. So do bookies and gambling casinos. In the same way the success of the Quantum Theory has largely been in its application to the study of atoms and molecules. In the majority of the applications of Quantum Mechanics, atoms, molecules or nuclei are studied, not individually, but in bulk, like in a flask of gas or a chunk of metal, containing a large number of identical atoms or molecules. Therefore a probabilistic prediction is sufficient for predicting the properties of such large samples.

However, there is a major difference between Quantum Theory and the use of a probabilistic and statistical approach to classical systems, like automobile insurance risks, or tosses of a dice. In the latter, we believe that in principle the individual behaviour of each coin, dice or automobile on the road can be exactly predicted using the laws of physics. It is difficult in practice to do this because of the large numbers of parameters involved and limitations of computational accuracy, and that is why one resorts to statistical and probabilistic methods. In contrast the lack of determinism in quantum theory is postulated as being intrinsic. It cannot be removed even if your instruments were infinitely accurate and your computers infinitely powerful.

In his essay on Quantum Theory in the book, Professor Pal presents a very clear discussion of the nature of indeterminism and uncertainty in the Quantum Theory. And he does so in a no-nonsense tone that would be heartening to anyone tired of the amount of quackery that has surrounded the philosophical mysteries of Quantum Theory. As the author puts it bluntly, "Because of its fame and popularity the Uncertainty Principle been profusely used and misused in philosophical discussions." He then proceeds to explain what the Uncertainty Principle does and does NOT say and how it is to be distinguished from more familiar sources of uncertainty caused by experimental errors and the unavoidable limits to the accuracy of any measuring instrument. He rightly debunks and cautions against the romantic notion of some that the lack of determinism inherent in Quantum Theory provides the "scientific" underpinning of human Free Will. There have been many who, without understanding either Quantum Theory or philosophy, have tried to justify, in the name of quantum uncertainty, plain confused metaphysical thinking. This essay also demystifies the concepts of wave particle duality and the Superposition Principle in Quantum Theory.

That Quantum Theory is intrinsically probabilistic and not deterministic is not, in and of itself, a weakness in its applicability. But this feature has caused deep unease among some physicists, including Einstein who is said to have remarked in anguish that "God does not play dice". Although this objection comes from one of the great scientists of all time, I would not call it a logical or a scientifically valid objection. It is more a cry from the heart of a great scientist based on his vision of nature—a psychological and emotional objection rather than a logical one.

The real problem with the Quantum Theory is that its structure is not completely closed. There is still a huge gaping hole involving what "Measurement" exactly means and what happens in a single act of measurement on a single system, as distinct from a statistically large collection of them. In some sense, the "standard" machinery of Quantum Theory, as given in textbooks, works perfectly well up to the moment of measurement, but stops working during the measurement process. To shed light on these problems, Einstein did not just stop with his aesthetic objection to God playing dice, but also spent years of his life constructing paradoxes and internal contradictions within the Quantum Theory. His long dialogue with Neils Bohr is the stuff of physics legends. These paradoxes and *gedanken* experiments put up by Einstein and others are also described clearly in this chapter on Quantum Theory.

Despite decades of debate between Neils Bohr and his followers on the one side and Einstein on the other, Quantum Theory still remains logically incomplete. Therefore the question of any person fully understanding it does not even arise. As against the old claim of only a few people understanding Einstein's Relativity theory, I would say that essentially nobody understands Quantum Physics fully. The amazing fact is that despite its incompleteness, Quantum Theory works so well and has such immense predictive power. It forms the underpinning of much of modern science and technology.

The chapter of Quantum Theory also contains a brief history of the early stages of the development of the subject. In particular there is a good account of S.N. Bose' work on Quantum Statistics, achieved in complete isolation in Calcutta.

The final chapter is a long one and addresses the related subjects of General Relativity, Astrophysics and Cosmology. GR involves a fairly sophisticated mathematical structure. Trying to understand its conceptually dazzling implications requires fluency with differential geometric methods. The concept of space-time curvature introduced by GR, and the profound identification of Gravity with Geometry on the one hand and with accelerated frames on the other, are as revolutionary as time dilation, matter-energy equivalence and other ideas that Einstein had earlier introduced in his Special Theory of Relativity.

Ordinarily one would not attempt to construct a populist non-technical summary of GR. The author has taken courage in his hands to do this, "for [the sake of] a large number of scientists (physicists included) who usually avoid this theory as too abstract and complicated...". I more than agree with that impression—in fact even among *theoretical* physicists, most have not studied GR at any depth, notwithstanding all the hype about Black Holes and Big Bang models.

But, much as I am sympathetic to the author's motivation in wanting to explain GR to a larger audience I fear that it is not an easy thing to do. Even the rudimentary discussion at the beginning of Chapter 14, introducing the metric tensor gij and its relation to Newton's Gravitational constant, may not be easy reading for most physicists, let alone other scientists. We will have to accept such sections of the book on a "take it or leave it" basis, meant for those who wish to learn these topics and have the technical background for it. Readers who take the trouble to do so will be rewarded in subsequent sections where they can then follow better the discussion of such glamorous topics as Black Holes.

In later portions of that chapter on Relativity Professor Pal moves on to discuss, using less mathematical and more verbal language, some of the amazing experimental consequences of GR. These include the bending of light around stars, the Perihelion shift of the planet Mercury, and the gravitational red shift. Even those readers who may find the theoretical derivation of the results difficult can still appreciate the physical phenomena involved. Of even greater interest to any curious layman would be the clear explanation in this chapter of certain everyday phenomena. For instance, here is something many non-physicists may not have realized. Although all of us on the earth are swinging around the sun at high speed, as in a huge merry go round, yet we do not feel its effect unlike, say, when our car or bus takes a bend on a curved road. Similarly, while you and I feel the all pervading effect of earth's gravity, we do not feel the massive gravitational force of sun, even though the latter is strong enough to hold the earth and other planets in orbit and not let them drift away. All this is very clearly explained as part of the book's discussion on "Freely Falling Frames".

After the discussion on GR the book goes on to an introduction to Astrophysics. The author takes pains to point out the distinction between Astronomy and Astrophysics—the latter coming into its own only when spectroscopic techniques allowed us to learn about stellar objects by analysing the light coming from them. These techniques have since grown from just optical spectroscopy to analysing the radio waves and X-ray and Gamma-ray from cosmic objects. The chapter also gives a very good discussion of the size and age of the universe there are also portions describing work done on Astrophysics in India from colonial times till today. Of interest to all, but especially to Indian readers is a section describing in simple terms Chandrasekhar's famous calculation in stellar physics—the Chandrasekhar limit. Capsule introductions are also given to important phenomena like Supernova Explosions, Pulsars, Quasars, the Microwave background radiation, and last but not least, that icon of modern Astrophysics—the Black Hole.

The chapter then goes on to Cosmology, which deals with the universe as a whole—its origins and future prospects. The model now widely accepted, the Big Bang model for the creation of the universe, is discussed along with major suggestions and developments needed to make that model satisfy various features expected from general principles of physics and cosmological observations. The theory of Inflation for the early development of the universe is discussed in some detail. For the non-expert who hears so much about Cosmology and the Universe in the popular press, it will be very valuable to get the story correct from this very professional summary.

The last few pages of the book are thoughtful observations flowing from the long experience of a senior Indian physicist about theories at today's cutting edge and the role of science in the larger domain of human thought, philosophy and political affairs.

A final remark on the chapters on physics in this book. Obviously readers are not meant to approach them as a source for learning *ab initio* classical physics, Quantum Theory or Relativity. Each of these subjects, with its full theoretical structure and concomitant derivations would be the material for a year-long classroom course and each would fill a volume as large as the present book of essays. Rather, the chapters in this book are meant for people who already have some familiarity with these subjects and who are interested in a further discussion of some of their fascinating conceptual features.

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REPORTS

National Seminar on "The Developments in Indian Philosophy from Eighteenth Century Onwards," 13–14 March 2008

The Centre for Studies in Civilizations, New Delhi and the Department of Philosophy of Madras University jointly organized a National Seminar on "The Developments in Indian Philosophy from Eighteenth Century Onwards" during 13 and 14 March 2008, based on the important volume, *The Developments in Indian Philosophy from Eighteenth Century Onwards* written by Professor Daya Krishna and published by the Centre for Studies in Civilizations, New Delhi during 2002. In this volume, Professor Daya Krishna deals with some new perspectives of looking at the classical traditions of Indian philosophizing, developments of different systems of Indian philosophy from eighteenth century onwards since the coming of the British, and also the problems and issues still remaining to be explored in intellectual history from eighteenth century up to the present time. The above book is important in the present context of understanding Indian philosophical tradition and culture. Professor Daya Krishna has given a new way of looking at philosophical problems in this book. His approach to Indian philosophy is remarkable and it has given a new direction for the scholars to think in a different way thus deviating from the traditional way of thinking.

The inaugural function of the seminar was held on 13 March 2008 at the University of Madras. Professor R. Gopalakrishnan, Head, Department of Philosophy, University of Madras, welcomed the gathering. Professor S. Panneerselvam, the Co-ordinator of the seminar introduced the theme of the seminar. The presidential address was delivered by Professor R.C. Pradhan, Hyderabad University and the keynote address was delivered by Professor R. Balasubramanian, Director of the seminar, former Director, Radhakrishnan Institute of Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras and former Chairman, ICPR. Dr. L. Anthony Savari Raj proposed the vote of thanks. Sixteen papers were presented during the two day conference.

Professor R. Balasubramanian in his keynote address evaluated Daya Krishna's contributions to Indian Philosophy. He argued that there are two Daya Krishnas, earlier and later and his perspective of Indian Philosophy has been the same from the beginning and his objective was to treat Indian Philosophy as philosophy, and not as religion, theology, mysticism, spirituality, other-worldly speculation, and so on. Balasubramanian further said that Daya Krishna wanted to rescue the philosophical traditions from the long and varied spiritual quest of India and to search for the self identity of Indian philosophy vis-á-vis western superiority and to think of Indian philosophy in terms of change, development, adaptation, and promotion of healthy, physical and mental life. Earlier, Daya Krishna was averse to the concept of "school" used with regard to Indian philosophical "systems". He viewed the concept of school as a myth. But later Daya Krishna was favourable to the use of the term "system". He says: "Systems of Indian philosophy are themselves a 'construct' out of innumerable texts, and they have changed over a period of time'. A close look at developments in various fields of thought from the eighteenth century onwards reveals that thinkers with Independent personalities have tried to approach traditional formulations creatively and to make original contributions of their own."

Professor R.C. Pradhan, University of Hyderabad, in his paper on "Daya Krishna's Philosophy of Value: Revisiting his Theory of Transcendental Value", made an attempt to understand Professor Daya Krishna's theory of value, especially his theory of transcendental value. Professor Daya believed that the basic problems of humanity are centred around the pursuit of values and that cultures and civilizations are the different forms of value-realization undertaken by man. Value-realization is the key to his theory of man and society. Daya Krishna is an axiologist *par excellence* as he considers his primary goal to establish that man's main metaphysical urge is to realize values not only in his individual life but also in the life of the community. For him, both the individual and society are primarily concerned with value-realization. The axiological point of view is wider than the moral point of view, because moral values constitute only a sub-category of values. There are intellectual, social, political, artistic and spiritual values apart from the moral values. That is why Daya Krishna makes a distinction between the moral and the axiological ought thereby making the demarcation between the moral values and those of other types of value clear. It is the latter type which is called broadly axiological, not to show that they are differently located but only to emphasize that they mean different ends to be pursued by the same individual. Of course, one can argue that moral values permeate the other values as well and hence the distinction itself is not necessary. But Daya Krishna's argument is that "the primacy of the moral 'ought' has been so much taken for granted in ethical discussion that the supra-personal and supra-social nature of values seems to have been entirely forgotten."

Dr. Shakuntala A. Singh presented a paper entitled, "Is there something like 'Indian Philosophy'?" She has asked the question whether the vast disparateness and multiplicity of ideas and concepts that are presumably subsumed under the all-embracing term 'Indian philosophy' can be a legitimate proposition. For, to so label it means one seeks to project a monolith, a harmonious, self-sufficient, well-functioning whole, with hardly any serious or fundamental contradictions within. Harmonious, self-sufficient and well-functioning it may arguably be, for they are value-judgements, which proponents must indeed apply to their chosen field of study.

Professor P. George Victor of Andhra University, in his paper, " Is Indian Philosophy a Philosophy or Theology?" argued that a keen study of the books written in the name of Indian Philosophy reveals that there was something new, and something different from what has been explained as philosophy starting from the ancient Greeks. The word 'philosophy' and its spirit, if applied on the books of Indian Philosophy' is impossible for a man, who has been already in touch with the beginning of philosophy either as a student or teacher, to reconcile the title 'Indian Philosophy' with the contents maintained and described in their pages. Though it seems unnecessary, but essential to remember that the word 'philosophy' is a derivative from a Greek term 'philein-sophia', which denotes 'to love-wisdom'. Etymologically it is "the love of exercising one's curiosity and intelligence." It is evident from the Greek thinkers that philosophy is the test of critical curiosity and proceeds by criticizing the received opinions. Accordingly the philosopher's task is to examine assumptions critically. The thinker of India is not individualistic but social and traditional, in the sense that he accepted his predecessor's arguments mostly and thereby advances his interpretation in support of them with new insights. The history of Western Philosophy "is the story of the development of reasoned human thought from its earliest beginnings down to the present time," whereas the Indian Philosophy reflects different systems followed by a tradition or justification.

Dr. Kali Charan Pandey, Gorakhpur University, in his paper entitled, "Daya Krishna and the New Interpretation of Indian Philosophy" said that in the penultimate paragraph of *Developments in Indian Philosophy from Eighteenth Century Onwards: Classical and Western* Daya Krishna points out not only the purpose of the book but also clearly delineates as to, what according to him, is the new interpretation of Indian Philosophy. Thus the concept of interpretation or reconstruction of Indian Philosophy for Daya Krishna is something unique because it is based on unknown horizons—an extended textuality which does take into account not only 'present' and 'past' of the text but also futuristic attitude of assimilation of various perspectives of the text. For Daya, this is what lacks in the historians and philosophers of history because they adopt the set pattern and do not bother to build a futuristic vision. Daya's debate with current *Naiyāyikas* on whether *Nyāya* is realistic or not.

The *Nyāya* system has been defined as Epistemological Realism par excellence as contrast to Epistemological Idealism of Berkeley.

Professor R.P. Singh in his paper, "On Method in Indian Philosophy: A Reflection on Professor Daya Krishna's Philosophy" has argued that the range of Dayaji's theorizing is extraordinary. He deals with most of the themes developed in Indian and Western Philosophical systems, on Consciousness and Values, including epistemological questions raised not only by Indian thinkers but also by Kant, Hegel, Marx, the phenomenologists, the linguistic philosophers and others, the debates around some of the most vital issues relating to *Mīmāṁsā, Vedānta* and *Nyāya* in Indian Philosophy. In addition, he has sought to achieve a thorough going synthesis of developments in social science and philosophy including analytical philosophy, the philosophy of science, linguistics, political science, systems theory and *rasa* theory. His writings always give an impulse to pause and to think on one's own. A method is a procedure, a way of doing or using Daya's terminology, it is an act or perspective of philosophizing. The ontological, epistemological and ethical doctrines become explicit with the help of the method that a philosopher adopts and the difference between one philosophical system and another consists in the kind of method, which has been pursued in a specific system.

Professor D. Nesy, Kerala University, in her paper, "On Doing Indian Philosophy: Problems and Prospects", said philosophical problems are different from other problems. The special features of philosophical problems are: concern about larger frameworks (frame problems) and not about specific questions; concern about the absence of definite and accepted methods of dealing with or solving them and concern about conceptual rather than factual issues. The issues in the usual areas of philosophy namely epistemology, metaphysics and the problem of values are dealt with in various ways of clarification and evaluation—the so-called Socratic method—and assertion, justification, comprehension and evaluation known as the rational dialogue. Hence philosophers do things like exposition, analysis, synthesis, description, speculation, prescription and criticism. But quite different from the concerns of earlier centuries, philosophy in the recent times is characterized by an excessive concern with logic and language. The question of defining and understanding the nature of Indian philosophy is important in this context. Contemporary Indian Philosophy, moving significantly in the direction of newer European models, particularly the British model of analytic and linguistic, to the exclusion of the American, German and French models is definitely a hindrance to the emergence of the International model, the philosophy of histodiamat.

Professor P.R. Bhat, IIT, Mumbai in his paper, "Philosophical Creative Method" said that our attention has been drawn to philosophical methods by several thinkers by claiming that the content is shaped by the very method we adopt to explore a certain subject matter. This is quite true of philosophical investigations. Historically speaking, Indian philosophers have been quite creative. This creative philosophical activity has reduced for many unnoticed reasons. What is warranted in the present day philosophical context is to distinguish between what is philosophically tenable and what is not. Given the fact that philosophy itself is a creative discipline, there would be no question of which philosophy is true or false, but which philosophy is closer to our philosophical intuitions or which one is not. This has been one of Daya Krishna's concerns. Professor Bhat said that we shall emphasize a philosophical method of doing philosophy, which one may call creative method in philosophy. We use this method to deconstruct some of the core concepts in Indian philosophy such as *karma, rebirth, jīvanmukta, puruṣārtha* and simultaneously making room for re-construction. A better point of view emerges according to the author which is philosophically defendable and rewarding.

Dr. Sreekala Nair of Sree Sankarachaarya University of Kalady in her paper, "Real as Knowable and Nameable: Some Observations of Daya Krishna on *Pratyakṣa Lakshaṇa*" explained how in his work *New Perspectives on Indian philosophy*, Daya Krishna takes up a rather curious problem "Is Nyāya Realist or Idealist?". The philosophical community in India went through that paper breathless since no one could have thought Nyāya to be holding an idealist position, though in fact, Indian philosophers hardly bother for this dichotomy, which Daya himself had acknowledged. The question he seems to be posing is this: can we meaningfully call Nyāya a realist school since some of its ontological assertions like *jñeyatvam abhidheyatvam ca padārtha sāmānya lakṣaṇam,* would force it to join the idealist camp. The argument goes like this: Nyāya popularly claims that the real is knowable and nameable. Keeping aside nameability issue, we may construct a dictum like this: "to be real is to be knowable". This dictum, Daya says, is suspiciously close to the Berkeleyan Idealist contention *esse* is *percipi.* Hence he concludes that Nyāya may better be tied to the idealist pole. Sreekala in her paper argued that there are no reasonable grounds for questioning the prevalent ontological position of Nyāya tradition. Historically Nyāya realist position is pitted against Buddhist phenomenalism and idealism. As Prof. Matilal points out, the dispute that lasted a little over twelve centuries between the Nyāya and the Buddhist over the nature of perception, the critique and criteria of knowledge and the status of the external world makes an important chapter in the history of global philosophy. The fundamental axiomatic positions of Nyāya and their rival tradition Buddhism are familiar even as initiator in the tradition. In fact the Berkelean positions with which he laboured much to identify the Nyāya position are in fact very much similar to the Buddhist idealist positions.

Professor A. Kantamani of Calicut University in his paper, "The Why-and-Wherefore of Counter/New Perspectives" argued that Daya's counter and new perspectives provide grist for further reflections. They require modifications that directly impinge on the structure of Indian philosophy. They invite "linguistic reforms" at three levels, at the conceptual, disciplinary and at the metaphysical level. No one has enquired into the legitimacy of translations at the conceptual level so as to sustain whether it is legitimate to translate cit/*puruṣa* as consciousness. Similarly, no one has determined the domains of epistemology (Potter has dismissed it) and ethics (if dharma answers the question "what I ought to do?" its modus operandi will be different from ethics as it is known' equally karma blocks freewill; no freewill, hence, no ethics). Similarly, the traditions of realism or idealism can hardly meet the challenges and criticisms. All these suggest that the way of filling up the gap between the new perspectives and more authenticated ones demand wide debate.

Professor Sundar Sarukkai, NIIS, Bangalore in his paper, "Re-interpreting Indian Logic" examined the significance of Indian logic from modern perspective. From Nyāya logic to modern logic he has shown how one can adopt a new perspective. Professor G. Vedaparayana, S.V. University, Tirupathi in his paper, "Daya Krishna's Concept of Philosophy: Some Comments" has argued how the traditional concepts in Indian philosophy were reexamined by Daya. Vedaparayana has shown how concepts like mokṣa and karma were reinterpreted by Daya thus showing a new way of approach to Indian philosophy. Professor R. Murali, Madura College, Madurai in his paper, "The Myth of the Purusharthas and the reality of the Varnashrama" has shown how in the contemporary age the above two concepts need a revisit and reunderstanding. Keeping Daya in the background, Murali has shown the need to follow the methodology developed by the contemporary thinkers. Professor S. Revathy, University of Madras in her paper, "Hermeneutical Approach of Daya Krishna towards Indian Philosophical tradition" explained the importance of the hermeneutical methodology in Sanskrit and philosophy and she has also shown the development of the hermeneutical method in the west and argued that Indian philosophical tradition is not alien to such method. Dr. Sreekumar, IIT, Chennai in his paper, "Daya Krishna on the Vedic Corpus" explained the need to reunderstand Vedic concepts using the methodology of Daya. Dr. Meenal Katarnikar, Mumbai University in her paper, "The Philosophical approach of Daya Krishna: A Critical Appraisal" has pointed out how Daya's methodology involves a critical approach and how it differs from other's methods. Mr. M.R. Venkatesh, Assistant Editor, *The Telegraph* in his paper, "Daya Krishna's approach to three myths of Indian Philosophy" has argued how Daya has explained the three myths of Indian philosophy in a unique way and also how it gave a new direction to Indian philosophers.

The Valedictory function of the seminar was held on 14 March 2008 presided over by Professor R. Balasubramanian and the Valedictory address was delivered by Professor Bhuvan Chandel, Member Secretary, CSC, New Delhi. In her address Professor Bhuvan Chandel remembered how Professor Daya was closely associated with the CSC and his keen interest shown in the PHISPC publications. She also explained how Daya Krishna made a distinction between the active and contemplative values. She also narrated how in Daya's approach the contemplative values played a significant role. Professor S. Panneerselvam proposed a vote of thanks.

S. PANNEERSELVAM
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